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ABSTRACT

This document presents an overview of the principal labor market measures taken by the 15 member states of the European Union since the publication of the 1995 overview. In each section, individual countries' actions are discussed separately, with code letters indicating the country name. The following topics are among those discussed in the section on vocational training: improving education and training systems (development of policies, decentralization, social partners, private sector, quality, equal opportunities in vocational training); promotion of lifelong learning (promoting access to training, recognizing informal training or work experience); and adapting to change (identifying skill needs, orienting training toward the information society). Examined next are the following aspects of increasing the employment-intensiveness of growth: external flexibility (probationary periods, individual and mass redundancy, fixed-term contracts, retirement and early retirement); flexible work hours (work sharing, part-time contracts, short-time working, partial retirement, family and education leave); incomes policy (minimum wage, wage negotiation, wage restraints); and promotion of initiatives. General and targeted reductions of statutory contributions to lower labor costs and encourage recruitment are detailed along with active and passive measures to improve the effectiveness of labor market policy. Concluding the document is a section outlining measures to help the following groups particularly hard hit by unemployment: the young; the long-term unemployed; older workers; and women and minorities. (MN)

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TABLEAU DE BORD 1996

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TABLEAU DE BORD
1996

Follow-up to the conclusions of the Essen European Council
on employment policies

Brussels • Luxembourg, 1996

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It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int)

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TABLEAU DE BORD 1996

The aim of the ***Tableau de Bord*** (Synoptic Table) is to present an overview of the principal labour market measures taken by each Member State. It is an instrument to assess progress towards structural reform of the labour markets, in the framework of the follow-up to the Essen Council decisions of December 1994. It complements other documents, such as the "Employment in Europe" Report of the European Commission; the Joint Report on Employment of the Commission and the Council to the European Council of Dublin; and the Background Report on the Implementation of Multi-Annual Programmes.

In relation to the ***Tableau de Bord*** of 1996, the present version has been modified only slightly. As part of the policy of mainstreaming of equal opportunities, chapter 5 now integrates all policies to help disadvantaged groups in the labour market. Furthermore, it was decided not to include the statistical sections in this year's version as extensive statistical information is provided in Annexes to the above-mentioned documents.

The information in the ***Tableau de Bord*** comes primarily from the 1995 version, updated by the Member States themselves through the MISEP network of the European Employment Observatory. The sections on vocational training and education, and reduction of non-wage labour costs were prepared by DG XXII and the Task Force on Statutory Contributions of DG XXI, respectively, in collaboration with their correspondents in the Member States. The sections on Equal Opportunities were produced with the help of the competent unit in DG V in collaboration with three European networks of experts on labour markets, positive actions and reconciliation. The coordinating role was played by unit A2 of DG V "Employment and Labour Market Analysis".

More detailed information about labour market policies in the European Union can be obtained from MISEP publications, such as the ***Policies*** quarterly bulletin or the ***Basic Information Reports***, which have been recently updated for every Member State.

Brussels, November 1996

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1. VOCATIONAL TRAINING

1.1 Improving education and training systems

1.1.1 Development of policies
1.1.2 Decentralisation
1.1.3 Social Partners
1.1.4 Private Sector
1.1.5 Quality
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1.2 Promotion of life-long learning

1.2.1 Provision of training
1.2.2 Promoting access to training
1.2.3 Recognition of informal training or work experience

1.3 Adapting to change

1.3.1 Skill needs
1.3.2 Orientation of training towards the information society
1.3.3 Industrial Change
1.3.4 Transfer of innovation and good practice

1.X Recent Measures

Development of policies

DK

Measures concerning young people - Persons under 25 years of age, who have not completed a vocational education of a minimum of 18 months or an initial vocational training, may only receive daily allowances until they have been unemployed for 6 months within a 9 months period. Hereafter they will be offered training. Persons with 2 years job-experience acquired in a period of 3 years may however choose job-training instead of training or education. When they have completed a total of 18 months of job-training or education, they regain the right to receive daily allowances.
All those in the labour market will have the possibility for adult and post-school education, so that they can retain their place in the labour market and ensure a qualified workforce for all areas of working activity. Free access to adult and post-school education will be introduced and efforts will be targeted especially at those with low skills.

A

The strategic objectives are:
- continual adaptation of the contents of vocational training to working life;
- priority to the development of key skills and foreign language skills at technical and vocational schools and in apprenticeship (Dual System).
- flexibility in curriculum design and administrative procedures.
- greater autonomy for individual schools.
- promotion of interchangeability within the various training segments of the vocational training landscape.
- expansion of Fachhochschulen (specialised higher education) to provide for continuing training for persons in employment.

E

The principle objective of the National Training Plan (PN) for 1993-96 is to bring closer together vocational training policy and the needs of production systems by putting in place a national system of qualifications based on vocational diplomas and certificates.

B

The multi-annual programme of October 1995 sets out plans for extending the programme of on-and-off-the-job training for under-qualified young people; greater opportunities for unemployed people to return to full time study whilst retaining their unemployment benefits which will increase their chances of re-entering the labour market.
The declaration of the Commune of Wallonia on economic redeployment and the promotion of employment stipulates that a training-employment plan will be developed which will aim to ensure that trainees are offered practical work experience in an enterprise along with a vocational training course. Those disadvantaged groups among job seekers: difficult to place unemployed people, handicapped people and young people will be particularly targeted by this measure.
An important objective of the Flemish accord on employment is to encrease efforts in the field of continuing training. The different training schemes for young people will be coordinated with a view to forming a coherent package of theoretical and practical elements. Training programmes for active people (the employed and the independent) will be adapted to labour markets needs.

F

Employment and training policies are developed around three axes:
- the integration of young people into working life, in particular through on-and-off-the-job training, and the reintegration of long-term unemployed into the labour market;
- support for industrial, economic and technological change;
- increasing the employment intensity of growth by reducing the cost of employment, in particular for low wages, and by developing local services.

D

FIN

The principal objective is to reform the structure of the education and vocational education system. To raise the levels of education throughout the system to meet the requirements of working life.

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Development of policies

GR

A target of the utmost importance concerning Vocational Training is its connection to the needs of Labour Market through the establishment of a National Body of Vocational Training certification.

NL

Strategic objectives are:
- to increase the participation in training of low-qualified workers and workers in SMEs training; and
- to improve the transparency of the market for training provision.

I

Current objectives are:
- the completion of the reform of occupational training institutes to improve the quality of training provision and reduce the numbers leaving without qualifications;
- to strengthen links with the regions, local authorities and economic sectors;
- the development of transferable post-secondary training courses;
- the development of the European dimension and language knowledge, with the support of EU programmes;
- to increase staying on rates at secondary level to 74%, with 65% obtaining a qualification by 1999.

P

Strategic objectives are, in particular:
- the gradual increase of access to at least one year of initial training, leading to a qualification for all young people entering the labour market (including measures in the context of the education system as well as vocational training linked to the labour market);
- the development of continuing training and the raising of the qualification level of the workforce,in particular, workers who are low-qualified, employees in SMEs, workers in sectors in decline and those affected by industrial restructuring.

Guaranteeing equality of opportunity by respecting obligatory schooling and the conditions for attending the different levels of education.

Access to pre-school education is a particular priority for the Ministry of Education.

IRL

Objectives are:
- a participation rate of 90% of young people in the higher (senior) educational cycle by the year 2000;
- enlarge the content of studies and the provision of vocational guidance for the higher education sector;
- develop vocational education and training systems to ensure that the work force meets the qualification needs of competitive industries;
- implement training and employment programmes to provide more opportunity to re-integrate the unemployed into working life.

S

The overall objective is to design a system with a high level of flexibility, enabling it to respond to the constantly changing demands of the labour market. Diminishing the gap between academic and vocational programmes in the upper secondary school when it comes to future career options is another important aim. Subsequently, pupils attending vocational education in Sweden are obliged to study academic courses in Swedish, English, Mathematics, Civics, Religion and Natural science. One distinguishing feature of the Swedish system is that initial vocational education provides general eligibility for university studies.

L

Reference points are set for the development of training policy, including the time to be devoted to training and the definition of key qualifications.

UK

In July 1995, the Departments for Education and Employment were merged into a new single Department. This has brought a new coherence and effectiveness to education, training and employment policies. National targets for training and education attainment have been drawn up by employers and endorsed by government. They are measurable targets outlining challenging attainment levels for young people, adults and employers. The National Targets have recently been revised, raised and expanded to include objectives for acquiring key competences.

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Decentralisation

DK Policy framework and aims are established at national and sectoral level by trade committees. Vocational training colleges and their local training committees have responsibility for the planning and delivery of training.

A Responsibility for vocational education in schools is shared between the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Länder e.g. personnel matters, implementation of curricular frameworks etc. Responsibility is also shared for apprenticeships. The Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs provides the apprenticeship regulations covering enterprises and defines job profiles and examinations. Suggestions and statements are carried out by the Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship on which the Social Partners sit. The regional apprenticeship office, set up with the Chambers of Commerce in the nine Länder, are in charge of administrative matters and of supervising the in-company-training activities. At regional level consultation is carried out with the Regional Advisory Board on Apprenticeship. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs share the responsibility for that part of the Vocational Training Act, that entitles apprentices to be kept in the company for a certain period after having passed the apprenticeship leave examination. In the post-secondary sector the Federal Government is no longer the sole provider of technical education and training. Fachhoch-schulen can also be established by private organisations.

E Responsibility for training policy in the framework of the PN rests with the national government. The autonomous regions will have responsibility for the management of initial training and training for the unemployed. There are currently already 6 autonomous regions which have taken on these tasks.

B Responsibility for the content of education and vocational training rests with the communities. The implementation of training policy is carried out by regional organisations.

F Apart from programmes for the unemployed, the implementation of public training programmes for young people is primarily the responsibility of the Regions. Priorities for training vary from region to region in accordance with needs. There is a diverse range of organisations, training bodies, public authorities, social partners, vocational bodies, local organisations and employers involved in the delivery of vocational training at regional and local level.

D Responsibility for initial vocational training is divided between two training agencies (dual system): enterprise and vocational school. For initial training in companies federal law is in force. The Länder are responsible for schools. The state-recognised occupations (currently 373) are defined according to labour market needs in close co-operation of federal and Länder governments and the social partners.

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FIN The quantitative framework for vocational training provision is set at national level. For young people the framework also covers the field and levels of training to be provided. The framework for the curricula and other matters concerning qualifications are also set at national level. Curricula introduced following reforms in 1994 are modular and provide objectives to be obtained, leaving the means of achieving those objectives up to the training providers. Responsibility for training provided by the labour market is the responsibility of the regions.
Ownership of state vocational schools is being transferred from national government to the municipalities and to partners in the private sector to create local multidisciplinary training institutions able to participate in local development.
Following the Essen European Council a Presidential Committee has been established to propose ways of improving employment prospects.

Decentralisation

GR Based on Laws 2224/94 and 2334/96, many competencies have been handed over to Districts and consequently to the Training Units, of OAED, functioning autonomously in co-operation to local Bodies (Traide Unions - Municipalities - Communities - other Bodies).

NL Responsibility for vocational training policy is shared at national level by government, and the central federations of employers and employees. Regional employment councils are responsible for the implementation of training policy and for training provision.

I The training policy framework is set at national level, which sets out the guiding principles, the specific priority areas, regulates the professions and undertakes research. The regions are responsible for promoting and financing training actions covering employed and unemployed people. By 1995, educational institutions will be autonomous in respect of their management and teaching methods.

P Responsibility for vocational training policy lies with central government and is implemented by the Ministries of Education and Employment (through its teaching department) through the public employment service, the IEFP (Institute for Employment and Vocational Training). The IEFP supervises a regional network of training centres, which it manages directly, or jointly and provides technical and financial support to training actions carried out by public bodies, co-operatives and the private sector, on the basis of agreements. The Education Ministry is also involved in vocational training at regional level through the Regional Education Directorates. The regions are consulted on training policy through regional consultative councils.
Training policy organised in the context of the labour market is the responsibility of the Employment Ministry in liaison with other ministries and the representatives of the social partners in the Economic and Social Committee.

IRL The Department of Education has responsibility for determining vocational training policy for young people under 18 years of age. Continuing vocational training policy and implementation is the responsibility of the national employment and training authority FAS. Separate national authorities - CERT and TEAGASC have responsibility for training in tourism and agriculture.

S National objectives are defined by parliament and the government whilst the municipalities have total responsibility for organising and implementing all activities within the public school system. Universities have been given greater autonomy.

L Vocational training policy (initial and continuing) is the responsibility of the national Ministry of Education. Continuing training policy is implemented by the National Institute for the Development of Continuing Training, the professional chambers and by municipalities and private organisations authorised by the Minister of National Education.

UK Vocational training policy is defined at national level and implemented through locally based Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales and Local Enterprise Councils (LECs) in Scotland. There is also a wide range of private sector provision, in addition to the extensive network of publicly funded colleges of further education, each of which is now independently managed.
Integrated Government Offices at regional level promote a coherent approach to training competitiveness and sustainable economic development.

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Social partners

DK

The role of the social partners is institutionalised at the national, sectoral and local levels as well as in the firms themselves. They are involved in the planning, quality and practical content of training as well as apprenticeship exams and qualification needs. Some social partner organisations also deliver education and training courses for adults.

A

The social partners play a significant role, especially in the apprenticeship and adult training sectors. The social partners have equal representation on the Advisory Board on apprenticeship. Occupational profiles are laid down in agreement with the social partners who have joint responsibility. Apprenticeship remuneration and some initial and continuing training measures are regulated in collective agreements.

E

The social partner organisations at national level are consulted on training policy as members of the national General Council for Vocational Training. They also have an important role in the development and approval of training plans by enterprises. These plans are supported by public funds, but managed by the social partners.

B

The role of the social partners in training is institutionalised at federal, regional, sectoral and enterprise levels. Their role at all levels is to set objectives, plan financing, implement and monitor training policies.

F

The social partners are involved in the development of vocational training policy at the national, sectoral and firm levels. They manage the organisations which collect the contributions for the training of young people and for continuing training.

D

The social partners' role in training policy is institutionalised through committee participation at federal, Länder and regional level; works councils; in firms and through sectoral collective agreements. Their role at all levels is advising on:
- the preparation and the implementation of the policy to ensure quality;
- the content and duration of training;
- the organisation of courses; and
- exam requirements.

Some trade associations and trade unions are also training providers.

FIN

The role of the social partners is carried out through committees and expert bodies. At national level the Committee for Educational Planning and the Committee for Labour Market Training give their opinion on both the qualitative and quantitative long-term needs for education and training.
Curricular as well as structural questions are considered in education committees covering the different branches (25) of education which comprise experts, including the social partners. Examination boards (130) comprise members nominated by the social partners and teacher organisations. Regional labour market bodies take part in labour market planning.

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Social partners

GR The social partners participate in national advisory councils on vocational training policy and in research activities relating to vocational training. They also participate in the certification committees. They have also been involved in the setting up and the implementation of training and guidance programmes which:
- are innovative;
- require co-operation among organisations at national or transnational level;
- require participants involved in training activities to make a financial contribution.

NL The social partners are actively involved in defining/maintaining the national qualification structure through their representatives in the educational field and through sectoral bodies. Involvement of the social partners with vocational education is also reflected in collective agreements, which contain provisions related to initial and continuing training and training leave.

I Social partners involvement is institutionalised through participation in committees at national and regional level, which define training policy. They are involved in decision policy for ensuring training quality and ensuring the relevance of training provision to meet business needs. Some social partner organisations are also training providers.

P The social partners share with the government the responsibility for implementing the constitutional right to vocational training. Their role is institutionalised through representation at national level on the Economic and Social Committee and the administrative council of the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) as well as the National Education Council. They also develop their own initial and continuing training programmes for employees. At the sectoral level they participate in the management of the national network of training centres. A tripartite employment and training observatory has recently been set up.

IRL The social partners are involved in the strategic direction of training policy through representation on the boards of national employment and training authorities and on industrial training committees which direct national policy at industrial sector level.

S The social partners have formed sectorial vocational councils at national level to follow and provide a contribution to consideration of the different issues concerning vocational education. The partners are also represented at local level. Local school boards are obliged to consult the partners on important issues.

L The involvement of the social partners is ensured through professional chambers, the members of which are elected. The chambers participate in the drafting of training policy and in its implementation.

UK The government encourages employers to take the responsibility for the training and development of their workforce. Whilst collective bargaining is not common at sector level, unions are often involved in sectoral working parties to develop standards and competencies, particularly with Modern Apprenticeships. In enterprises the scope of bargaining and consultation varies.

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Private sector

DK The private sector is a provider of on-and-off-the-job (alternance) initial and continuing training system for employees, young and unemployed people.

A The private sector provides vocational training mainly within the framework of the in-company component of apprenticeships but alsowithin the framework of technical and vocational schools and the Fachhochschul-sector.
Continuing vocational training is largely provided by private institutions, in particular by the social partners (including both courses within the enterprise and those outside).

E The PN involves the private sector in line with its aim of linking vocational training policy to production needs. Experts from private sector enterprises are also involved in the development of qualifications for initial and continuing training. Private sector enterprises draw up plans for training within enterprises and are also envolved in actions for continuing training within the action plan for public grants under the National Accord on Continuing Training.

B The private sector is a provider of initial training in an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) system. The private sector also provides continuing training for employees and - with support from public funds - tutors and facilities for adult education and unemployed people.

F All socio-economic actors can act as training providers for continuing training for adults. The private sector participates in initial and continuing training arrangements for young people, on an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) or full-time basis. A recent law, not yet in force, introduces principle of an agreement for organisations deposited with the government, as sufficient for involvement of the private sector in training.
An approval for training providers has been introduced, which places them on a probation period for 3 years which aims to provide basic guarantees in respect of the quality of the training services provided and seeks to ensure that the training provider has satisfactory financial and administrative arrangements and capacities and that they provide quality services.

D The private sector provides initial training for young people through the dual system. Continuing vocational training is carried out in an open system with many suppliers (enterprises, associations, schools).

FIN The private sector is a provider of both institutional as well as apprenticeship type training, in accordance with an agreement on training between municipal authorities and private companies. The training provided for young people and unemployed taking part in education can be carried out in vocational school or at the workplace.

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Private sector

GR The private sector provides training for young people through an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) initial training dual system and for employees, which can be supported through public funds. It also participates in the area of research and pilot projects.

NL The private sector is a provider of training for young people in an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) initial training system, and for employees.

I The private sector promotes and finances training activities for its own employees.

P The private sector provides initial training for young people through an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) apprenticeship system, as well as through vocational, technological and other types of schools. They also provide continuing training for workers. The private sector receives financial and technical support from the IEFP and the Ministry of Education.

IRL The private sector provides initial training for young employees through an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) apprenticeship system and continuing training for their employees.

S The private sector provides initial as well as continuing training. This takes mainly the form of apprenticeship training for young people and on-and-off-the-job continuing training courses. Local resource and community development centres have been developed in some municipalities to stimulate co-operation between public and private organisers of education and training. Some bigger enterprises have started in-company vocational education and training at upper secondary level in co-operation with municipal schools.
Upper secondary schools have been given the possibility of contracting companies to provide vocational training. A number of university colleges arrange so-called cooperation study programmes offering a combination of academic studies and practice in a private enterprise. Various forms of cooperation at university level exist within the framework of "commissioned" education.

L The private sector participates in the training of young people through an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) initial training system and implements training for employees.

UK Private sector employers take the lead in implementing training policy, including in the setting of the national targets. TECs / LECs are also led by private sector employers at the local level and at the sectoral level employers take the lead through standard setting industry lead bodies and industry training organisations. The private sector is also the principal training provider for: young people through an on-and-off-the-job (alternance) based youth training scheme; their employees; and in providing some training and work experience for unemployed people through publicly funded programmes.
The Government targets funds to develop training in small firms.

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Quality

DK Projects by the national evaluation centre examine different aspects of education and training quality, including : objective factors (e.g. pass rates); organisation and delivery; and user evaluation. Other measures include quality certification for training providers.

A Quality is assured in initial vocational training by continuous curriculum update carried out in consultation between the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, the Social Partners and the Länder. Legally set occupational profiles define the minimum requirements concerning knowledge and skills.
The quality of in-company training is monitored by the apprenticeship offices. An accreditation and quality assurance body exists for the Fachhochschul-sector.
Involvement of the chambers of both sides of industry and the trade unions in the areas of control and monitoring as well as the participation by works councils and youth councils contributes towards the management of the quality and quantity of training supply.

E Quality will be assured by: the creation of an Interministerial Unit for Vocational Qualifications to update qualifications; the network of National Centres for Vocational Training which is responsible for innovation and the development of training courses for trainers; the creation of centres for training, innovation and the development of vocational training, to analyse content, develop curricula and organise the training of teachers; minimum standards for training providers; programmes of vocational guidance; and periodic evaluation of the training system.

B A range of measures are used to maintain quality including: giving greater consideration to qualification levels; the numbers of unemployed people finding work after training; quality certificates for training providers; and education inspectors.

F The Office Professionnel de Qualification des Organismes de Formation (OPQF) can deliver an opinion on training providers, taking into account the organisation's structure, the views of its clients and the competence of the trainers. AFNOR standards have just been introduced or are being prepared to provide the framework for the basic definition of a particular occupation. The certificate of quality assurance (AFAQ) is compatible with the international quality standard ISO 9000. Training organisations are invited to put in place quality assurance systems to enable them to clarify their procedures and set up arrangements for ensuring quality.
Criteria have been developed which take into account the target public, the objectives to be achieved and the number of people finding jobs. These aim to improve the quality of publicly-funded training and the way public funds are invested in it.

D Standards for in-company vocational training are laid down in the form of minimum legal requirements governing traineeships in state-recognised occupations. Standards for school-based vocational training are laid down in federal state curricula. Quality is assured through a range of methods: the chambers hold statutory counselling and supervisory powers for traineeships and retraining; statutory consumer protection regulations for distance learning; statutory standards for continuing training delivered under the Promotion of Employment Act; criteria in legislation at Länder level for the recognition of continuing training institutions; quality assurance systems implemented by training providers in compliance with DIN/ISO 9000; criteria laid down by regional bodies.

FIN The contents and objectives for initial training are set at national level. An evaluation system is being developed by the National Board of Education, which includes self assessment, outside evaluations and evaluation made within a certain educational branch.
Adult education has competence based examination system for both initial and continuing education and training. This system also applies for all apprenticeship schemes.
Total quality, relevance and effectiveness of education and training is evaluated in a number of research programmes. Indicators, such as the number of employed graduates from institutes are being developed.

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Quality

GR

Applications from private enterprises for training programme subsides are evaluated on a set of criteria, including: the relevance of the training to the objectives of the enterprise; the training materials, method, content and duration; and the availability of instructors. Quality will be increased through certification of training programmes provided by authorised organisations. Minimum standards for training providers have also been established. A national centre for vocational training has been set up to specify the criteria for the development of continuing training centres in Greece, under the responsibility of the Labour Ministry.

NL

Legal provisions and guidelines cover the quality and organisation of training, responsibility for which is devolved to the training institutes. In addition to traditional inspection, external expertise is sought to evaluate how training institutions manage quality. Trainers traditionally need to acquire a number of qualifications, defined by the Education Ministry. These qualification requirements are developed from the occupational profiles established by educationalists.

I

The improvement of training quality is a primary objective and is achieved through: the National Assessment Committee; continuing reform of training methods; monitoring and evaluation of this reform; and by evaluation and monitoring of training courses supported by the European Social Fund.

P

Quality is maintained through legal provisions and guidelines setting minimums, in particular for initial training there are reference frameworks outlining quality criteria. Work has been started on establishing current needs to regulate the training market, with a view to introducing a certification system for vocational training.

IRL

A training programme specification standard assures quality in training design and covers: objectives; instruction methods and materials; and assessment systems. A national Standards Committee oversees quality management and policy. There is also some inspection and certification for external training procedures. The new National Certification Authority, TEASTAS, will have a role in assuring quality standards.

S

The maintenance and improvement of quality rests mainly on a system for monitoring and evaluating the education system. The national agencies and the local authorities as well as the schools themselves are important players in this respect.

L

"Total quality" is being introduced in the context of training and ISO standards are applied to some training courses. Other evaluation methods are being examined.
Quality criteria are being defined by the Ministry of Education and Training in co-operation with vocational chambers.

UK

Providers of training for government programmes have to be approved and are monitored by TECs in terms of quality and financial contracts. The UK approach is characterised by a focus on outputs. There has been considerable effort to develop standards of competence which are reflected in vocational qualifications. Increasingly, training is geared to achieving qualifications, or credits towards them. Contracts for publicly-funded provision contain specifications which assure that the process is of high quality and consistently leads to achievement of a qualification. There is, however, ring-fenced provision for those with special training needs.

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Equal opportunities in vocational training

DK Measures to promote equal opportunities include a one year vocational education and training programme for adult women.

A The Employment Services Agency runs special training schemes to train women returning to working life, for example employment foundations, employment projects leading to qualifications.

E In the PN, priority is given to women returning to the labour market after a long absence. They are also given priority in the "Plan for Training and Occupational Integration" which focuses upon the unemployed. This plan applies the principle of equality in the selection of trainees.

B Equal opportunities are promoted through positive action for women, including: information and advice; training in non-traditional occupations; and support for women with children.

F Business training plans must indicate action being taken to promote equality of opportunity. There is also modular training provision for women returning to the labour market. Training pilot projects, financed in part by the government, to examine ways of diversifying employment for women are being undertaken.

D Equal opportunities measures include support for women with few qualifications and advice and guidance to re-integrate them into working life after a long absence from the labour market.

FIN Equal opportunities are supported by the means of positive discrimination in general student election procedure.

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Equal opportunities in vocational training

GR Equal opportunities are promoted through increasing support for women with children or other responsibilities. Training is also provided for people with special needs.

NL Along with specific help directed at qualifying women for the labour market, educational policy also aims at equal opportunities within the initial education and training system. The policy on equal opportunities is not restricted to gender issues, but is also directed at opportunities of disadvantaged target groups like migrants, handicapped and people with insufficient qualifications.

I The legal framework provides for positive action in the field of equal opportunities and seeks to promote: increased participation of women in training; integration of women in occupations where they are under-represented; reorganisation and more flexible working arrangements.

P Training measures target young and adult women to assist their personal and vocational development. Activities include: basic vocational training and education; training in management and new employment fields; training in traditional crafts; and for women in male-dominated occupations.

IRL Positive action measures, in particular, advice and re-training programmes are provided, to help women re-integrate into the labour market after a long period of absence. These measures are included in the Operational Programme for Human Resources 1994-1999.

Participation in E.U. pilot programmes and initiatives has also promoted equality of opportunity for women.

S The government has recently presented a bill aiming to improve equal opportunities within the entire field of education. The bill sets a number of goals with the overall objective that gender equality should permeate all aspects of education.

L Public training provision seeks to help women to re-integrate into the labour market after a long period of absence.

UK Training provision seeks to be flexible to reconcile domestic responsibilities, and facilitates part-time participation in training courses and provides support for child care costs. Those eligible for publicly funded training provision include labour market returners and single parents. Training provision includes: confidence building; job search techniques; training courses including in management and non-traditional occupations.

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Provision of training

DK Basic or advanced education and training is provided for adults, along with open education courses (part time further general and vocational education); public training provision for skilled and semi-skilled workers; enterprise - oriented courses to meet specific business needs; training "offers" to unemployed people; self-employment support programmes.

A Initial vocational training is the basis of lifelong learning. A broad range of training programmes are available to adults. Both social partners have established their own continuing training institutions. Collective agreements and company promotion arrangements encourage the uptake of continuing training opportunities. There is a large number of training providers: private and public-sector agencies and institutions run by the social partners.
Funding for vocational training measures for the unemployed and persons whose jobs are at risk. Special support for measures for the long-term unemployed, disabled persons and these disadvantaged in the labour market.
In the "second chance" education and training sector (courses for persons in employment), instruction and examinations have been adapted to suit the needs of adults. A special code of instruction is used for adult education in vocational courses for persons in employment; distance learning elements are used in the curricula.

E Individuals already integrated into working life can benefit from initial vocational training as well as vocational training which is aimed both at unemployed people and those already employed in enterprises. The training courses available are listed in a catalogue of professional diplomas by the education system and in a directory of professional qualifications complied by the Ministry of Labour. In addition to training provided under the National Accord for Continuing Vocational Training by the public authorities, more informal training is available.

B Basic education programmes are provided for adults, as well as adult education for personal development and education for social advancement (evening and week-end courses in general and vocational education). There are also training programmes for employees and unemployed people and for self-employment, as well as support from public funds for training in SME's.

F Programmes for continuing training are provided for: employees and unemployed people; basic education and low-qualified adults; education for social and cultural advancement; workers in SMEs.

D Continuing training and general education measures are provided for adults with few qualifications. There is also: in-school continuing training for trade and technical specialisms; advanced and further training for employees; training measures for unemployed people; and support from public funds for training in SME's.

FIN Initial, adult and labour market training is mainly provided by vocational institutes and universities. A second chance for basic vocational education is provided both through the institution based programmes as well as through competence based approaches. Short courses are provided on large scale by different actors. Almost half of the employees take part in training activities every year. A system of language tests has been established on the basis of the Act on public language examinations 1994, to promote the linguistic skills of adults. Adult education systems are planned to take into account prior learning. The competence based examination system has been devised to make also full use of prior work experience and informal learning.

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Provision of training

GR

Adult further education and vocational training programmes are provided for: employees to improve career prospects; low qualified workers; and unemployed people.
Training levy on employers has been adjusted to 0.45% of the wages bill.

NL

The provision of adult education is divided between publicly funded and commercial educational services. Distinction is made between 'second chance education and training' (disadvantaged target groups), training for the (long term) unemployed and training of the active labour force and adult education for personal development. Government policy is directed at stimulating transparency of the market of publicly and privately funded educational services for adults.

I

Training programmes are provided for unemployed people and workers affected by industrial change in disadvantaged areas where there is a serious imbalance between labour supply and demand. In-company and further vocational training programmes for employed people in other cases where there is an imbalance between labour supply and demand. Courses at state institutes are being diversified. Evening courses for workers are being organised on a credit accumulation basis enabling them to obtain training in basic skills or more specific training leading to recognised qualifications. Agreements are in place with enterprises to perfect training activities in specific economic sectors and geographical areas. A commitment has been made to enlarge training opportunities for workers.

P

Basic and secondary education is provided for adults, as well as training courses for employed and unemployed people and management training for SMEs and co-operatives.

IRL

Training measures exist for: basic adult education; training of employees - in particular, those affected by industrial change; low-qualified employees; workers in SME's; employees in new industries locating in Ireland; managers; unemployed people; and for training for self-employment.
The FAS Training Support Scheme (TSS) is designed to increase and improve training within Irish Business and it is aimed at improving the skills of existing employees at all levels in order to increase competitiveness, quality and productivity. TSS is open to firms engaged in manufacturing industry, internationally traded services (including non-manufacturing construction firms trading internationally), physical distribution, wholesale, retail and motor sectors. The training need must be clearly identified and linked to a business plan or strategy within the firm's development and training plan framework. Training grants are targeted at smaller firms/employers and priority is given to training programmes where formal recognised certification exists.

S

Training programmes for employed and unemployed people are provided by different training units. Education for adults is provided by the municipalities covering compulsory and upper secondary level, universities and university colleges, as well as the industrial and the commercial sector.

L

There are training programmes for: basic education for adults, long-term unemployed people with no professional qualifications; job-seekers wishing to return to the labour market or change jobs; job seekers with professional qualification who have difficulties in finding a job in line with their skills and expectations.

UK

Employers are encouraged on a voluntary basis to develop their employees. The Investors in People standard sets a benchmark. The Government has published a major consultative document on lifetime learning. The response was excellent and replies are now being analysed. There is extensive provision for training and vocational education for young people and adults, including the unemployed and covering vocational skills, enterprise training and basic skills delivered via traditional courses and by open and flexible learning. Extra provision for Investors in People has been made. The small firms training loans scheme provides deferred repayment loans to help small firms of up to 50 employees to improve the skills of their employees and increase productivity and growth. The loans can be used for training costs or for consultancy to prepare training plans. Two initiatives - 'Skills Challenge' and 'Skills for Small Businesses' - address the particular training needs of SMEs.

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Promoting access to training

DK There is free access to many continuing training courses and programmes. Up to 1 year's leave on approved adult education or vocational training courses can be provided, during which trainees receive unemployment benefits (which can be supplemented by the employer). Adult employees with low educational attainment can take part in general and vocational education courses during working hours. Training is provided for "risk groups" - people with disabilities, ethnic minorities.
Payment for unemployed people whilst training

A Vocational counselling and information services are available during compulsory education. Access to public-sector schools and higher education institutions, is free including courses for persons in employment. Cash benefits are provided to cover vital needs for unemployed persons in a retraining programme. Short-term assistance is available to employees seeking further qualifications via the "second-chance" route. Some companies finance continuing training for their employees

E Access to initial training is assured through the provision of information to those seeking training and through the growing number of training centres. The majority of secondary education institutes also provide vocational training. Access to continuing training is also assured through collective agreements. To promote and stimulate these agreements, the National Agreement on Continuing Training, signed in 1992, provides for part financing by public funds of the costs of training plans in enterprises or joint training plans (involving several enterprises) for SMEs with less than 200 people. The link between initial and continuing training is ensured by the connection between the diplomas for initial training and the certificates for adults participating in training at different stages throughout their working life. Under certain conditions of collective agreements, workers can also have the right to training leave for vocational education.

B There is legal provision for paid study leave for approved general or vocational education for workers under 40. Employers costs are (fully or partly) covered by public funds. In addition, there is tax relief for individuals for training expense and payments and bonuses for unemployed people whilst training. Measures are also in place to promote training for "risk groups" - people with disabilities; workers under threat of unemployment; long-term unemployed; older workers. Reduced social security contribution for employers who recruit workers to train.

There is a training levy on employers of 0.5 % of wage bill (1993-94). The Brussels region also provides grants for up to 12 months to employers recruiting unemployed people who face particular difficulties in finding a job, with a view to providing training for them.

F Business training plans must indicate the priorities for training and identify activities for low-qualified workers. Government encourages enterprises to provide training actions for low-qualified workers, as well as older workers at risk of unemployment. Enterprises contribute 0.2% of gross salary costs towards funds for training leave. The duration and arrangements for training leave are legally fixed, adopted according to sector. Public training programmes are also provided for those looking for a job.

D Nine Länder have educational leave laws implemented through collective agreements. Most provide 5 days per year. Federal and Länder grants are available for investments in training facilities and for individuals. Special "target groups" for training support are: the long-term unemployed; older workers; younger workers; and workers in SME's. Payments are made to unemployed people in training.

FIN Legal rights to study leave for employees were introduced in the 1980's. The adult study support system gives support to adults participating in self motivated education. Employers finance self motivated vocational education for adult employees through a fund administrated by the social partners. In labour market training unemployment provision exists to help the unemployed.
A working group based on the President's Employment Working group is finding ways to grant equal support for studying adults independent of their employment situation.
A further increase for basic and further training was implemented by the government during 1994 in response to youth unemployment. This meant supplementary access to training for almost half of the age cohort.

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Promoting access to training

GR Access to training is a matter determined by agreements between employer and employees. Free access exists to many vocational training programmes and grants are paid to trainees. Special target groups for training include: people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and the low-qualified. Training programmes are being developed in traditional professions (handicrafts, silversmiths etc.) where this leads to employment. There are tax exemptions for training for certain qualifications. Training levy on employers of 0.45 % of the wages bill, refunded on the implementation of approved training programmes. Further co-operation with the social-partners is developing access to continuing training throughout working life.

NL Training leave is implemented through collective agreements. On average one to three days per year are granted, but in exceptional cases leave can be for between eight and ten days. Priority groups for publicly funded training measures are low skilled workers; long-term unemployed people; ethnic minorities; people with disabilities and workers in small and medium-sized enterprises. Grants are available for unemployed people whilst training.

I Agreements between social partners at national, regional and company-level provide structures to promote access, including special leave for professional training during working hours. There are also reductions in labour costs for young people undergoing training. Payments are made to unemployed people in training.
A national mass-media information campaign has been undertaken aimed at a wide audience seeking to raise the quality and quantity of training.

P Access to vocational training is a constitutional right. The legislation in force provides for grants for training for workers and unpaid training leave for training courses is provided in the framework of the social dialogue. Technical and financial aid (in the form of loans or grants) is provided to public and private training providers for training materials and equipment. Payments are made to unemployed people in training. Priority groups for public training programmes are: low-qualified workers in particular those in SMEs, people with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities and workers affected by industrial change.

IRL Training grants are available to firms submitting satisfactory training plans.There is a levy-grant system with rates varying by industrial sector ranging from 0.25 % to 1.25 % (1992). Refunds are given on the basis of a satisfactory testimonial of training carried out by the Chief Executive of the enterprise. Priority groups for publicly funded programmes are long-term unemployed people and people with disabilities. Payments are made to unemployed people in training.

S Access is promoted by legal rights to educational leave for the individual as well as a state funded system for financial aid to students. This system applies to all types of education for people between 20 and 45 years of age.
In order to facilitate access to higher education experiments are undertaken to distribute higher education using new technology, i.e. interactive video.

L Some sectoral collective agreements provide for paid special leave for training to further the interests of the enterprise. Negotiations are underway at national level on regulating access and exercising the right to training. Priority groups for public training measures include the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, workers affected by industrial change. Payments are made to unemployed people in training.

UK Access to training and to paid training leave are matters for agreement between employers and employees. Tax relief and subsided loans are available to individuals paying for training leading to national vocational qualification. "Investors in People" initiative promotes the integration of training into company plans and objectives. Allowances are paid to unemployed people whilst training. Those eligible for public training programmes include long-term unemployed people: people with disabilities; ethnic minorities; people in large scale redundancies; and labour market returners.

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25

Recognition of informal training or work experience

DK

Vocational Training for Adults (VTA) gives possibilities in nearly all vocational training courses to complete a vocational education with full recognition of training and work experience.

A

People who have not spent the usual time in school instruction or in apprenticeship can enter for the final apprenticeship examination if they are at least 21 and can submit evidence that the knowledge and skills required have been acquired in another way (work experience in a relevant field or attendance at relevant courses).
Persons with an upper secondary vocational qualification who have completed three years of work experience are entitled to use the title "Ingenieur"; after three further years of work experience they can take an examination to qualify for the corresponding college diploma.
Access to master craftsman qualification or the certificate of occupational competence (necessary for self-employment and business start-ups) generally presupposes that the candidate has gathered relevant work experience.

E

Basic vocational education is part of secondary level schooling between 12-16 and part of the "bachillerato" (16-18). Vocational education is also offered as part of post-compulsory "middle-level" education (from 16-18) and as part of "higher level" (18-20). It is provided on a modular basis with duration varying with the occupation concerned. Those over the age limit can obtain access to the relevant level by taking an entry examination.

B

F

New methods of recognition of informal training or experience are found in three distinct areas:
- the individuals right to an assessment of their skills which allows each working person to obtain information on their abilities and potential;
- the possibility to prepare for national education qualifications as a "free candidate", outside the usual academic route;
- a qualification or part of one can be obtained through the validation of work experience. This system allows anyone who has worked for at least five years to have their work experience taken into account as evidence of some of the skills/knowledge needed to acquire certain qualifications.

D

Informal vocational training is not generally recognised or validated by the state. However, work experience is a statutory prerequisite for: participation in the external examination scheme; obtaining continuing training qualifications.
In all other cases the definition, recognition and the account taken of work experience is left to the labour market.

FIN

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Recognition of informal training or work experience

GR

Recognition and certification of informal training or work experience has been under consideration by a working group in the Ministry of Education. The target groups of the Continuing Vocationl Training schools (founded in 1968) are a) adult labour workers b) those completing their training with an additional specialisation.
According to certain conditions, informal training and professional experience is certified in the case of professions recognized by law.

NL

In 1994 a report on recognition of acquired skills and competences has been published by an expert committee installed by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science to give advice on this matter for further policy development. The decentralised and open character of the national qualification structure provides for a bottom-up definition of attainment targets by sectoral social partners and educationalists, resulting in a qualification structure applicable to any learning route leading up to these attainment targets. In response to the mentioned report government urges schools and national bodies to develop assessment procedures in pilot-projects, to be mainstreamed in their regular practice.

I

Compulsory education 6-14 years. There are plans to raise the school leaving age and to introduce a new curriculum. The upper secondary phase (14-18) provides general and technical streams. Technical training courses last five years, the first three years lead to a general qualification, the second two years lead to an occupational qualification at a higher level. The occupational institutes provide general vocational qualifications to facilitate the integration of young people into the labour market, or a final qualification through a regional based training course, or access to university. Universities provide degree level courses in vocational subjects. Free universities offer the same degrees as state universities but are privately funded and have no legal status.

P

An academic and vocational qualification system is being implemented which incorporates the recognition of competencies and experience gained outside the formal education and training system.

IRL

The National Education and Training Certification Authority - TEASTAS - which was established in 1995, will be responsible for the establishment, direction, supervision and regulation of a national qualifications framework. The recognition of informal training and/or work experience will be considered by the new Authority.

S

L

Informal training and work experience are validated by the Ministry of Education and Training in consultation with the relevant vocational chambers. Validation is carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Training where it concerns the application of the minimum wage.

UK

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) describe the standards required for an individual to become competent in an occupation but not the route. They allow for the recognition of competence developed informally and through experience gained in the workplace. Candidates must produce evidence that they meet the standard as defined in the qualification. They are observed in the workplace, carrying out specific activities and demonstrating competences. Competence may be demonstrated through written or oral evidence. Previously acquired achievements are recognized through Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). A candidate for such recognition is required to register with a validated NVQ centre, normally an employer or college.

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Skill needs

DK

Trade and branch committees study training and qualification needs through qualification analysis and close contact with companies on training and skill needs.

A

Future skills and training needs are identified on the basis of a series of studies carried out at the initiative of the social partners within the framework of the Advisory Council on Economic and Social Affairs. Constant communication between representatives of the two sides of industry makes it possible to update the knowledge and skills necessary for working life.
Qualification needs surveys are also carried out by the Federal Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, the Employment Services Agency and at regional level. Formal surveys of skill needs are carried out on an ongoing basis.

E

A system of skill needs analysis has been introduced which includes sectoral studies to examine the characteristics of production processes and the changes in occupations. On the basis of these studies training provision is revised. Jobseekers pass a vocational skills test which shows the level of their skills and their training needs in the light of the type of work which is available and the vacancies offered in enterprises.

B

Skill needs research undertaken by the Communities includes: vacancy analysis; analysis of programme take-up; labour market / education study groups on specific issues.

F

Studies of skill needs are undertaken supported financially by the government in sectors identified in consultation with the social partners. These focus upon future economic developments and their impact upon qualification needs. A network of regional employment and training observatories also provide statistical information on training activity and undertake studies into the training and qualifications needs of enterprises.
At local level, studies and action programmes can be taken forward by representatives of the public authorities and enterprises to examine areas experiencing recruitment difficulties.

D

Skill needs and assessments are carried out by the Federal Government and the training authority analysing training behaviour, qualification profiles and labour conditions. Other forecasts are commissioned examining the demographic changes and labour needs.

FIN

The Ministry of Labour is responsible for describing the developments in working structures, job classifications and qualifications. The committee for educational planning publishes its opinion on the long term development in the different economic sectors. Labour market training systematically anticipates regional labour market needs.
Research efforts and database systems on core skills and qualification needs are being strengthened to establish systematic anticipation of qualifications.

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Skill needs

GR Skill needs are assessed by tripartite committee in each prefecture, which is organised by OEEK.
Skill needs research is carried out by OEEK with the support of EU training programmes.

NL Through active involvement of sectoral social partners in defining standards for qualifications , the national vocational qualification structure is updated to adapt to qualitative changes in skill needs.

I Some regions have forecasting models for skill needs. An agreement with the social partners foresees the development of joint organisations dealing with research on training requirements and future design of training standards.
Greater flexibility has been given to occupational institutes to enable courses to be adopted. In addition, Post-qualifying training courses are also being developed, in agreement with the regions, to meet specific local needs. As part of the national plan, periodically working groups from educational and professional organisations are set up to develop new courses to meet new training needs. Experimentation in teaching methods also takes place at school and national level. Consideration is being given to a training plan for public authorities (at State and Regional level). Its aim is to improve the use of resources.

P An analysis of qualification needs is being developed at national level for the medium and long-term taking into account professional groupings, labour forecasts in different sectors, and new vocational profiles. Short-term skill and training needs of businesses are established through data collected from companies (the latest information relates to 1993-95). The Employment and Training Observatory has been created with a view to identifying the qualification needs of the working population in the short and medium term.

IRL Future skill needs are assessed through the occupational manpower forecasting model. This model currently provides forecasts for the period 1991 - 96 and examines demographic trends, sectoral composition of employment, changing qualification needs, labour demand and occupational profiles. Other studies of skill shortages based on vacancy analysis are carried out. Sectoral manpower studies aim to identify manpower and training needs over a 5 - 10 year period.

S The keyword is flexibility. It is a matter of devising a system which is able to give an immediate response to changes in the environment, i.e. to adapt to new technologies, new demands from the labour market as well as from potential students etc. By consequence, this approach attaches less weight to long-term forecasting.

L The National Institute for the Development of Continuing Training undertakes, together with the professional chambers, analyses of activities and methodologies of continuing training.

UK An annual analysis of labour market skill trends is undertaken based on changing occupational structures within sectors, there is regular analysis of skill needs at sector level to feed into competence based qualification standards, local labour market research is carried out by TECs / LECs and shared with colleges of Further Education, and some skill needs analysis is undertaken by employers. The UK has published the results of Skills Audit which compares its competitive position with four other countries.

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Orientation of training towards the information society

	DK Computer-based training and inter-active video materials used by some employers and training providers in the public sector. In the pubic sector new learning forms and methods are under implementation.
A A foundation course in information and communication technologies is compulsory at all schools. Handling modern technologies is part of all curricula but is particularly important in the intermediate and upper secondary vocational education sector and in the apprenticeship sector, where new technologies are encountered automatically but with different weightings during the in-company training. A large number of continuing training measures concentrate on modern technology.	E Training courses incorporate both the theory and the use of new technology. New training techniques using new technology are tested in special centres, before being disseminated and applied more generally.
B	F Developments in new technology taken into account in reassessing qualifications. A research centre at the use of new technology in education is being established.
D Distance learning materials are being developed, including multi-media learning programmes and interactive systems. Technological changes are taken into account in the revision of training content and qualifications.	FIN Information technology is a compulsory part of vocational education and training. The focus of current development is in multimedia and telecommunications technology. A data network for teaching (Edu.fi) as well as open electronic mail forum (Freenet) has been developed for schools. Internet is being widely used by the schools and institutes. The government has published development targets for information society. The information network concerns also vocational education.

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Orientation of training towards the information society

GR

During the last year the use and the application of new technology is an integral part of the secondary education.
A distance training programme is being developed by OEEK, linking three vocational training institutes.
Computerisation and instalment of Networks concerning OAED Training Units, a submitted proposal through pilot projects concerning actions against social exclusion, distance training programmes addressed to the population of Cyclades, islands and the implementation of training of trainers at multi-media should also be added to this paragraph. Other measures include:
- Computerisation and instalment of Networks linking OAED Training Units,
- a proposal for pilot projects to combat social exclusion,
- distance training programmes aimed at the population of the Cyclades islands, and
- training trainers in multi-media teaching methods.

NL

A government programme called PRESTO (1992-1994) aimed to increase the application of new technologies in vocational training. Links with associated european actions have been established, and will continue from 1995 onwards in synergy with the LEONARDO/community initiatives/R&D-programmes of the EU. Themes linked with new opportunities in telematics (like access of educational institutes to electronic highway) are currently prioritised.

I

New regulations covering vocational education refer to the ongoing adaptation to changes due to the impact of new technology. Initiatives are also taken within the training organisations.

P

Particular importance is given to the integration of new technology into education and training programmes, as well as to specific training in new technology.
A Council Resolution in March 1996 created a working group to set up general and sectoral measures to develop the information society.

IRL

Measures to improve the quality of training are included in the Operational Programme for Human Resources 1994-1999. They lay heavy emphasis on responding to technological change, both in the content of vocational training and in the delivery methods used.

S

A computer network has been organised and offered to all schools in Sweden by the National Agency for Education. The network aims at introducing the prospects of utilising computers in a more systematic and integrated way in education activities.
The National Agency for Education is running a project, embracing 40 schools, to this end.
The National Agency for Education has been commissioned by the Government to develop a policy for the use of computers in schools. A commission has been appointed with the task of promoting the widespread use of information technology.

L

The Public Research Centre stimulates and undertakes research and development activities and carries out activities organising technology transfer between public and private sectors. It also advises companies on the implementation of new technologies and the dissemination of information. The Centre also provides some training courses for executives to update their knowledge of new technologies.

UK

New technology has been used to develop an infrastructure for open and flexible learning. Activities include the production of materials such as texts, audio and video tapes and technology based training products; consultancy and training needs analysis for companies developing customed learning materials and systems. Broadcasting and open learning methods are used through the Open University, Open Polytechnic and Open College. Higher education business partnerships are supported to facilitate technology transfer, further training and exchanges between the science base and industry.

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Industrial change

DK Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for re-training through publicly funded measures and programmes.

A Government-supported schemes are available to retrain workers whose jobs are affected by and at risk because of industrial change. Companies, too, are also investing more in manpower resource development.

E The National Plan (PN) takes into account workers who are threatened by industrial change. The National Agreement on Continuing Training provides financial support to requalify workers threatened by unemployment.

B Workers effected by industrial change are an "at risk" group and a priority for re-training through publicly funded measures and programmes.

F Workers threatened by industrial change are a priority group for publicly funded re-training programmes. In addition, agreements on the development of training, signed by government, professional organisations and enterprises, enables enterprise skill and competence needs to be anticipated and to prepare workers for changes to their jobs.

D Publicly funded measures provided to retrain workers affected by industrial change who are a priority group. An action plan for retraining and workers has been implemented in the new Länder.

FIN Workers affected by industrial as well as other changes in working market are guided to publicly funded labour market re-training programmes. Anticipation to industrial change in risk sectors gives a possibility to companies for publicly funded training of personnel. Development projects for SMEs include investments in human resources.

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Industrial change

GR Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for support from publicly funded training measures.

NL Policy regarding innovation in vocational training is moving towards an integral policy for further development of the national 'knowledge infrastructure' in an international perspective. A priority issue is 'transference' of R&D-results to the labour force through initial and continuing training. Furthermore the importance of 'key qualifications' is being increasingly stressed in view of the need for lifelong learning.

I Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for publicity funded re-training measures.

P Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for support from publicly funded training programmes.

IRL Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for publicly funded training provision.

The Operational Programme for Human Resources 1994-1999 includes measures to facilitate adaptation to industrial change.

S Workers affected by industrial change or "at risk" to become unemployed are a priority group for re-training through publicly funded measures and programmes.
In order to raise general qualifications in the labour force the government has proposed a programme which aims at promoting people with work experience to attend studies at university level. The programme embraces the introduction of special eligibility requirements as well as a more beneficial financial aid for those concerned. This measure is addressing people with additional need of formal education as a precondition for further professional development.

L Workers affected by industrial change are a priority group for publicly-funded training measures.

UK Consultancy and advice is available to companies undergoing industrial change. Workers in large-scale redundancies can receive immediate access to publicly funded training courses.

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Transfer of innovation and good practice

DK

A

Common-core curricula for related fields of training, especially in secondary colleges for engineering, allow for flexibility in the choice of specialisms.
A requirement that all staff teaching the theory of or developing skills in a given occupational field must themselves have several years of experience in industry or business (depending on occupational field concerned).
Training for trainers and the aptitude test for trainers includes drawing up learning goals suitable for the occupational profile concerned, planning in-company training, preparing, implementing and monitoring the training, conduct of the trainer vis-à-vis the trainee. Training manuals for trainers developed by the training institutes of the social partners.
Establishment of trainer circles to encourage the exchange of views and information on new training methods. Experimentation of new training routes through school-based pilot projects, the establishment of initial and continuing training networks and special promotion for qualification schemes. Priority importance is given to training opportunities to persons in employment using modular part-time and distance learning elements.

E

B

F

Innovation is developed by "open learning" provided by different training providers, based upon multi-media materials. Campaigns have been undertaken to promote training using multi-media materials and open and distance learning. Open learning is being developed for job-seekers in several regions on a trial basis, providing short-individualised courses, principally for training in information technology. The training authorities have also improved training organisations' access to multi-media products.

D

Alongside policy-driven and practice-driven innovation in the field of vocational training, there is also a substantial element of innovation which originates in research. The innovation process is decentralised. The main contributors are private bodies engaged in initial and continuing vocational training, the social partners and government agencies. The main instruments available are state-subsidised pilot projects and programmes, regulations on initial and continuing training, multimedia projects, continuing training of training personnel.

FIN

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Transfer of innovation and good practice

GR A recent law (2434/96) concerning the linking of training and employment through special vocational training programmes is one particularly innovative measure.

NL The government recently launched a VOTEC 2000 Fund, to be implemented in co-ordination with European instruments aiming at Human Resources Development and industrial innovation, like LEONARDO, ADAPT and the 4th Framework Research & Development. Mainstreaming of innovation is encouraged by an institutional setting to stimulate cooperation between different types of actors in the field. For instance cooperation of schools with national bodies encourages the feed-back of project results to update the qualification structure. Mainstreaming in policy is done by international comparison and policy-oriented research.

I

P The Ministry of Education supports and promotes regional meetings and forums which aim to disseminate innovative and good practice in the fields of education and training.
A programme of initiatives to improve the quality of education has also been set up. This supports innovative projects and the dissemination of results through meetings, exchanges and publications.
In this context, there are also pilot projects at local level which are associated with schools and "Employment centres". These partnerships schools/employment centres will be strengthened in future.

IRL Participation in E.U. Programmes such as LEONARDO da Vinci, Socrates, etc., together with European Social Fund Initiatives which include YOUTHSTART, HORIZON, NOW and ADAPT, have enhanced our knowledge of best practice standards through transnational partnerships.

S This is mainly supposed to emerge through the close co-operation between schools and the labour market. The stress is laid on informal exchanges of information and experiences. It is vital to develop a national policy for cooperation at local as well as at central level.

L Innovation in training policy and practice is the responsibility of the co-ordination service for pedagogy and technology (SCRIPT) of the Ministry of Education and Training.

UK The Employment Department publishes annual details of its priorities and plans for supporting the development of national vocational education and training systems. The work is taken forwards primarily through partnerships projects. Project outputs are disseminated through conferences, seminars, publicity and promotional events, reports and other publications. Feedback from such activities helps to formulate future development plans and policies. TECs liaise with each other to ensure the spread of good practice in a number of ways, including publication networks. Studies are funded to help and identify good practice.

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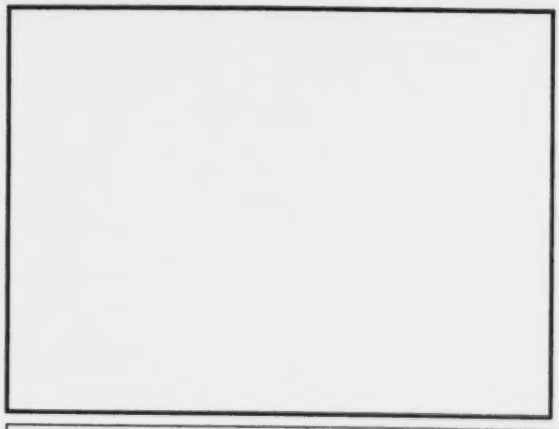
Recent measures



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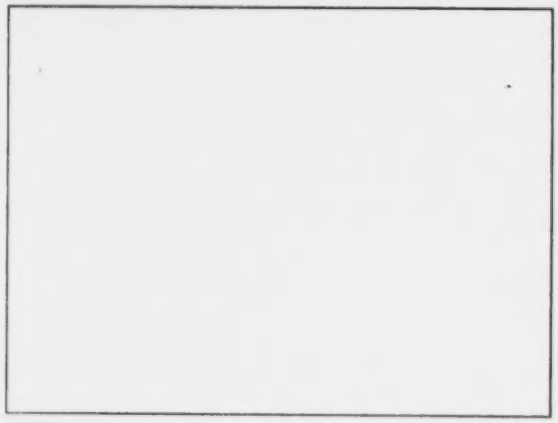

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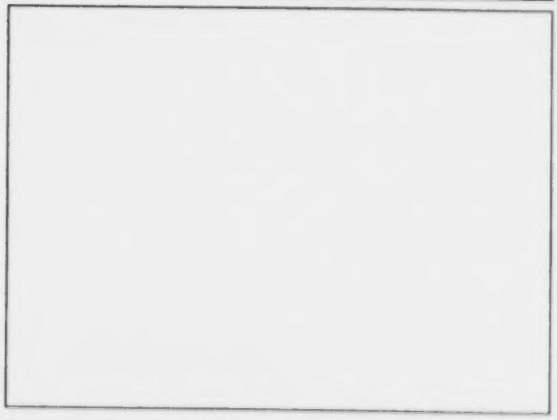

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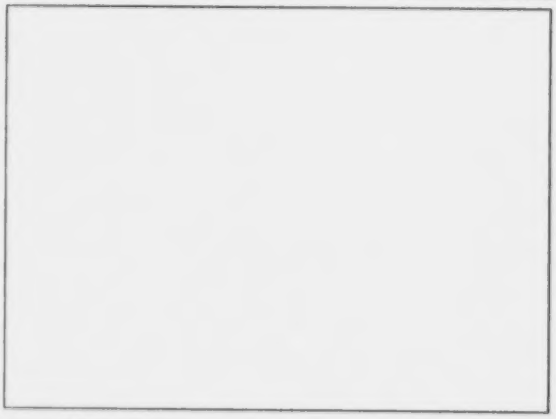

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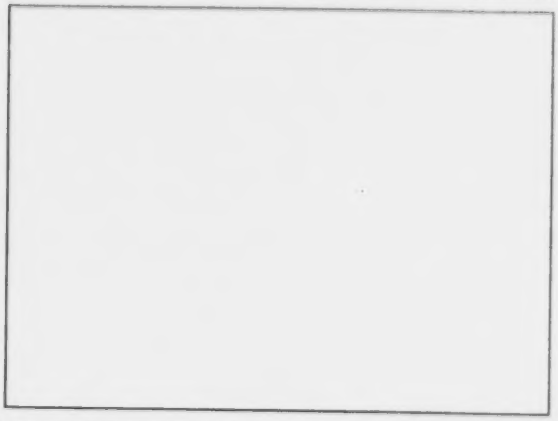

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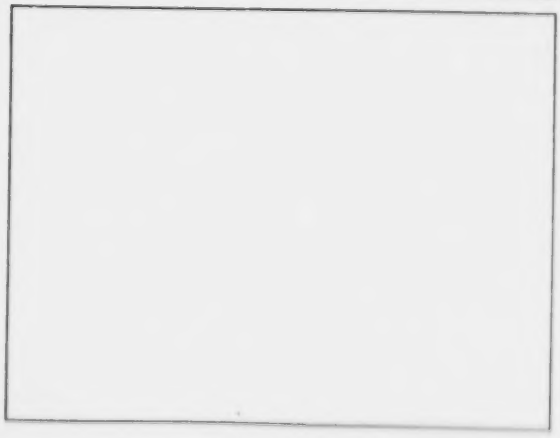

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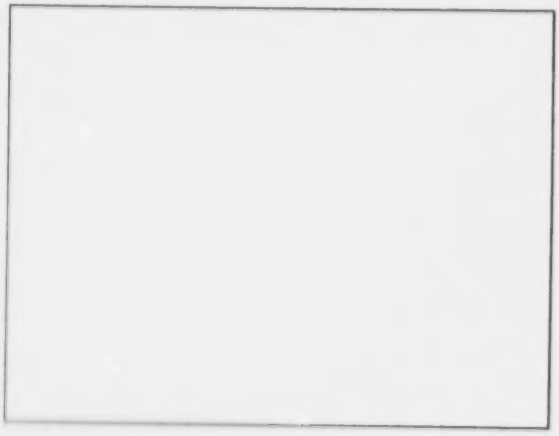

Recent measures

GR

Contribution concerning implementation of intrafactory training programmes (ELPEKE, EKLA).
Contribution concerning creation of programmes against unemployment.

NL

I

P

IRL

S

L

UK

2. INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT-INTENSIVENESS OF GROWTH

2.1 More flexible organisation of work

2.1.1 External Flexibility

2.1.1.1 Hiring staff/Probationary periods
2.1.1.2 Individual redundancy
2.1.1.3 Mass redundancy
2.1.1.4 Fixed-term contracts
2.1.1.5 Retirement and early retirement

2.1.2 Flexible work hours

2.1.2.1 Legal and contractual limitations to working time
2.1.2.2 Arrangement of working patterns
2.1.2.3 Work sharing
2.1.2.4 Part-time contracts
2.1.2.5 Short-time working
2.1.2.6 Partial retirement
2.1.2.7 Leave for family reasons or for education

2.2 Incomes Policy

2.2.1 Minimum wage
2.2.2 Wage negotiation
2.2.3 Wage restraints

2.3 Promotion of Initiatives

2.3.1 Framework measures
2.3.2 Local and household service
2.3.3 Social and environmental services

2.X Recent Measures

Annex to chapter 2

Hiring staff / Probationary periods

Probationary periods give both parties to an employment contract considerable flexibility, as the contract may generally be terminated without notice and without penalties. Probationary periods vary in the Member States between two weeks and six months, but are usually longer for white-collar staff. In Denmark 14 days' notice is required even during the probationary period.

A

Blue-collar and white-collar workers: 1 month maximum (limit laid down by the law). The worker may terminate the employment relationship without notice and without giving reasons.

B

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Blue-collar workers: 14 days;
White-collar workers: 6 months; if pay > BFR 1 076 000: 12 months.

D

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Not specified in legislation; in general not more than six months.

DK

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
White-collar workers: 3 months, with 14 days' notice required.
For certain types of jobs the probationary period is more than 3 months.

E

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
The maximum period for probation is set in collective agreements. In the absence of a collective agreement, the maximum cannot exceed:
- for technical staff with diploma: 6 months ;
- for other workers: 2 months.

F

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Managerial staff: 3 months.
Others: 2 weeks or 1 month depending on the length of contract, customary practices or agreements (collective or individual).

FIN

In general the maximum length is 4 months. If, however, the employer provides training, the probationary period can extend to 6 months.

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Hiring staff / Probationary periods

GR

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
2 months

NL

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
2 months

I

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Statutory provision: 6 months.

P

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
All workers: 60 or 90 days, depending on whether the company employs fewer than 20 workers or 20 or more workers.
Managerial staff and senior white-collar workers: 240 days.
Highly qualified workers: 180 days.
Fixed-term contracts: 30 or 15 days, depending on whether the contract is for more than six months or not.
Domestic staff: 90 days.

IRL

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Not laid down in legislation.
However, six months' notice is often required.

S

The law establishes the possibility of a 6-month probationary period at the request of the employer. Notification must be given in order to terminate the probationary period. Otherwise the probationary period shall become employment for an indefinite period. Deviations from these rules may be made through collective agreements.

L

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Between 2 weeks and 6 months.
Exceptions: may not exceed three months for low-skilled workers and 12 months for employees whose gross monthly earnings reach a certain level.

UK

PROBATIONARY PERIODS:
Not specified in the legislation. Probationary periods are a contractual matter. Normal rights to notice apply to employees during the probationary period, ie 1 week's statutory notice (which increases to 2 weeks on completion of 2 years service).

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Individual redundancy

Except in the event of serious misconduct, individual redundancy necessitates observance of a period of notice which normally depends on length of service. Redundancy pay depends on length of service and the worker's status (blue-collar or white-collar). In Germany, the periods of notice for the two categories have recently been aligned. Among the Member States there is considerable variation in periods of notice and redundancy pay. In Italy, redundancy pay goes up to an average of 45 weeks' pay.

A

White-collar workers, termination of contract by the worker: 1 to 6 months. Blue-collar workers: legal period of notice of 14 days subject to agreement in collective agreements, company agreements and individual contracts.

Termination of contract by the employer : between 6 weeks and 5 months after 25 years of service. The collective agreements and the individual contract can extend the period of notice.

White-collar and blue-collar workers are entitled to statutory compensation where their contract is terminated through no fault of their own or by amicable agreement.
Compensation is also payable where a worker with ten years' service resigns in order to retire. The amount varies between two months' pay for workers with three years' service and 12 months' pay for workers with 25 years' service.

B

Blue-collar workers: from 7 to 56 days
White-collar workers: 3 months per 5 years' service.
Where annual salary > BFR 1 792 000, the period of notice is specified.
Average redundancy pay: 22 weeks' pay (white-collar workers)
The period may be extended by collective agreement

D

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: from 1 month to 7 months
Average redundancy pay: 13 weeks' pay

The period may be shortened or extended by collective agreement or extended by individual contracts.

DK

Period of notice for blue-collar workers: included in collective agreements
Period of notice for white-collar workers: from 77 days to 6 months
Average redundancy pay: up to 13 weeks' pay

E

Redundancy for objective reasons must be based on one of the following: employee's incompetency; inability to adapt to technical changes in the work place; economic, organisational or production reasons; excessive absence;
Period of notice: 30 days
Statutory redundancy pay: 20 days' pay for each year of service, to a maximum of 12 months. This does not affect the legislation for dismissal for gross misconduct.
Average cost of redundancy in days: 231 days

F

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: 1 - 2 months
Average redundancy pay: 17 weeks' pay

FIN

The period of notice must comply with either the Employment Contracts Act (Työsopimuslaki 320/70 as amended) or the contract. Termination of an open-ended contract of employment requires one of the parties to give notice or the contract to be annulled. The period of notice may alternatively be agreed in advance under employment contracts or collective agreements. The period of notice for the employer is between 1 to 6 months; for the employee 14 days. Failing a negotiated settlement, the statutory period of notice has to be observed.

Effective since 1.3.1996 notice periods for new employment contracts were cut from two to one month and the employees' period of notice to 14 days in employment relationships under one year.

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Individual redundancy

GR

Period of notice for blue-collar workers: no statutory period
Period of notice for white-collar workers: from 30 days to 24 months
Average redundancy pay: 29 weeks' pay

NL

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: at least 1 week for weekly wage earners and 1 month for monthly wage earners. This period is extended by 1 week (with a maximum of 13 weeks) for each year of service for workers older than 18 years. An additional week is given (with a maximum of 13 weeks) for each year in age a worker is over 45.

Average redundancy pay: one month's pay per year of service where termination of the contract of employment is by court ruling.

Procedure: authorisation from authorities necessary.

I

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: no statutory period - covered by collective agreements
Average redundancy pay: 45 weeks' pay

P

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: 60 days
Average redundancy pay: 1 month's pay for each year of service, minimum 3 months.

Individual redundancy is authorised for valid reasons, linked to abolition of job on economic, market, technological or structural reasons, or due to the worker's incompetence.

IRL

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: one week after 13 weeks' service up to 8 weeks after 15 years' service or more
Average redundancy pay: 10 weeks' pay

S

An employer may dismiss a worker owing to lack of work or for personnel reasons. Dismissal must be justified by objective reasons.

Period of notice (statutory provisions) depend on the age of the worker: 1-6 months
No statutory redundancy pay, but often regulated through collective agreements.

L

Period of notice for blue-collar and white-collar workers: from 2 months to 6 months
Average redundancy pay: from 1 to 12 months' pay

UK

Redundancy pay: guaranteed by law (depends on age, pay and length of service) and any provision in the employment contract or a collective agreement.

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Mass redundancy

Mass redundancies require notice to be given, generate redundancy pay (generally higher than for individual redundancy) and require consultation between the social partners. In some countries (e.g. Germany and France) the company is also required to draw up a social plan. In certain countries, including France, employers' obligations regarding procedures to be followed have been simplified (authorisation by the authorities no longer needed).

DK

Mass redundancy is where, within a 30-day period, the following numbers of workers are made redundant for reasons not attributable to the workers themselves:
- at least 10 in companies which normally employ more than 20 but fewer than 100 persons;
- at least 10% of the workforce in companies which normally employ more than 100 but fewer than 300 persons;
- at least 30 in companies which normally employ at least 300 persons.

Consultation: employees or their delegates. The Labour Market Office must be informed.

Notice: 21 days - 6 months

Redundancy pay: not guaranteed (unemployment benefit)
An amount is earmarked in the Budget for special (vocational/employment promotion) measures in areas in which mass redundancies pose serious problems to the local community.

A

Provisions based on Community directive.
Consultation: works council to be informed in writing, consultation on measures to avoid, eliminate or alleviate the adverse consequences for workers (social plan).

Period of notice: companies must inform the Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) if they intend to terminate, within a period of 30 days, the employment of
1. at least 5 workers in companies with more than 20 and fewer than 100 employees, or
2. at least 5% of the workers in companies with 100 to 600 employees, or
3. at least 30 workers in companies with more than 600 employees, or
4. at least 5 workers who have reached the age of 50.

E

By mass redundancy, is understood:
1. termination of the employment contract for economic, technical, organisational or production reasons, when over a 90 days period, the termination affects: a) 10 workers in a company of fewer than 100 employees; b) 10% of the workers in a company with between 100 and 300 employees; c) 30 workers in a company with more than 300 employees;
2. termination of contract for all employees in a company (at least 5 people) due to the complete cessation of the activities of the company;
3. termination of contract due to force majeure, whatever the number of employees.
Consultation: works council or workforce delegates, and if need be, trade unions
Redundancy pay: 20 days' pay for each year of service, to a maximum of 12 months.

B

Belgian legislation defines mass redundancy as where a company with more than 20 employees, excluding those on fixed-term contracts during the previous year, proposes to dismiss, within 60 days and for operational reasons: at least 10 employees, in the case of companies with more than 20 but fewer than 100 employees; at least 10% of employees, in the case of companies normally employing at least 100 but fewer than 300 persons; at least 30 employees, in the case of companies normally employing at least 300 persons.

Consultation: the employer must inform in advance and consult the workforce delegates and must also notify the head of the subregional employment service at his business's location about planned mass redundancies.
Notice: 7 days to 15 months (or more for employees with more than 25 years' service)
Redundancy pay: normally based on statutory provisions, length of service and collective agreements.

F

Mass redundancy is when two or more workers are made redundant on economic grounds within a 30-day period. Different rules on information and consultation apply depending on whether more or fewer than 10 persons are made redundant within a 30-day period.
Consultation: workforce delegates and works council.
The regional employment department (Direction départementale du Travail) must be informed.

Notice: 1 - 2 months, or as stipulated in collective agreement.

Redundancy pay: a minimum sum is guaranteed after two years' continuous service.

D

The 1969 Act on protection against dismissal defines mass redundancy as redundancy for urgent economic or operational reasons of the following numbers of employees (excluding managerial staff) during a 30-day period: more than five in an establishment employing between 21 and 59 persons; more than 25, or 10% of the total workforce, in an establishment employing between 60 and 499 persons; at least 30 in an undertaking with 500 or more employees.

Consultation: works council. The Federal Employment Office must be informed.

Notice: 1 - 7 months (or as specified in collective agreement).

Redundancy pay: not guaranteed, but stipulated in collective agreements or social plan.

FIN

The employer has the right to terminate an open-ended employment contract if the volume of work has diminished significantly and for the foreseeable future, for financial reasons, production reasons or other similar reasons, and the worker cannot reasonably be redeployed, taking account of his/her vocational skills and qualifications. Where the reasons for a cutback is a reduction in the volume of work for financial or production reasons, the employer must give advance notice to the workers' representative and, where 10 or more workers are affected, the employment services.

There is a special redundancy pay scheme managed by the Training and Redundancy Fund (koulutus- ja erorahasto), which is financed by employers' contributions. It covers older workers who are made redundant for production or financial reasons after having been in the same job for many years. The redundancy payment is independent of unemployment benefit.

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Mass redundancy

GR

Mass redundancy is defined in Law No 1387 of August 1983 as the dismissal, not linked to their individual contracts, over a one-month period, of up to five workers in companies with between 20 and 50 workers or 2-3% of the workforce up to a maximum of 30 in companies with more than 50 workers.

Consultation: workforce delegates, trade unions, works council. The Employment Office must be notified.

Notice: from 5 days' to 5 months' notice or pay (or more in the case of workers with more than 28 years' service)

Redundancy pay: depending on length of service. Reduced by half in the case of voluntary redundancy.

NL

The Law of 24 March 1976 defines mass redundancy as the laying off, over a three-month period, of at least 20 workers within the sector covered by the Employment Service Regional Board (RBA Regionaal Bestuur voor de Arbeidsvoosziening). Mass redundancies may, however, be covered by collective agreements, in which case the definition may be more specific.

Consultation: trade unions with members at the workplace in question, and the works council. The RBA to be notified in all cases.

Notice: covered by the law: 1 week or 1 month to 26 weeks

Redundancy pay: no binding provisions; covered by collective agreements and depends on age and length of service.

I

Law No 223 defines mass redundancy as redundancy due to a reduction or change in activities affecting at least five employees in a specific production unit over a 120-day period or five employees in different units belonging to a single employer in a single province.

The Law does not apply to managerial staff (dirigenti) or workers in companies with fewer than 15 employees. All redundancies in companies with fewer than 15 employees are covered by the laws on individual redundancies, even if they take place simultaneously.

Consultation: workforce delegates, trade unions and employment authorities.

Notice: 1 - 12 months, or compensation, though usually regulated by collective agreements.

Redundancy pay: guaranteed by the law; depends on length of service and wage.

P

The law defines mass redundancy as the termination, within a three-month period, of the individual contracts of at least two workers in an undertaking employing between 2 and 50 persons or of at least five workers in an undertaking employing more than 50 persons, provided that such redundancies are linked to the closure of the undertaking or a specific part of it, or to a reduction in the workforce owing to structural, technological or economic factors in general.

Consultation: works council or trade union committee. Ministry of Employment to be notified.

Notice: 60 days.

Redundancy pay: 1 month's pay for each year of service, minimum 3 months. Higher amounts set out in collective agreements.

IRL

Mass redundancy is where, over a 30-day period, an employer plans to make redundant at least five employees in an establishment employing more than 20 but fewer than 50 persons, at least 10 employees in an establishment employing more than 50 but fewer than 100 persons, 10% of employees in an establishment employing more than 100 but fewer than 300 persons, or at least 30 employees in an establishment with more than 300 employees.

Consultation: workforce delegates. Department of Enterprise and Employment to be notified.

Notice: 1 - 8 weeks' notice or compensation, and in accordance with employment contract or collective agreement.

Redundancy pay: guaranteed by the law; depends on length of service and age.

S

See 2.1.1.2

L

Amendment to the legislation regarding mass redundancies by the law of 23/7/95. This amendment strengthens the protection to workers against mass redundancies. The setting up of a social plan with the trade unions is also included.

Consultation: workforce delegates, works council and trade unions recognised by collective agreement. The employment authorities must be notified.

Notice: 75 to 165 days

Redundancy pay: as laid out in the social plan and respecting the minima detailed in law or collective agreements.

UK

Mass redundancy is defined as the dismissal of at least 20 employees at one establishment within a period of 90 days for a reason not related to the individuals concerned.

Consultation: either recognised trade unions or elected representatives of the affected employees. Department of Trade and Industry to be informed.

Notice: 1 - 12 weeks' notice or pay.

Redundancy pay: guaranteed by the law (depends on length of service) and the employment contract.

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Fixed-term contracts

The use of fixed-term contracts is regulated in all countries except Ireland and the United Kingdom. Generally speaking, such contracts are allowed only for the performance of specific tasks, and there are restrictions on duration and renewal. In some countries an allowance is payable at the end of the contract. In many countries the rules on fixed-term contracts have become more flexible in recent years.

A

Regulation: yes
Expires on the due date. Date of expiry must be clear.
Termination not possible, although with joint agreement early termination possible for exceptional reasons. A succession of fixed-term contracts is not permitted, except on objectively justified grounds. If no grounds are present , then the contract is for an unlimited period.
Allowances at end of contract after a minimum of three years.

B

regulation: yes
restrictions: no
maximum duration: no (except for successive fixed-term contracts under Article 10a of the Law of 3 July 1978 concerning employment contracts).
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: yes
renewable: Article 10 of the Law of 3 July 1978 concerning employment contracts stipulates that when parties conclude several successive fixed-term employment contracts without any break in this succession for which the employee is responsible, then they are deemed to have concluded an open-ended contract. However, a new Article 10a provides for two possibilities for concluding fixed-term employment contracts whereby the legal presumption in Article 10 does not apply. The period of validity of this new approved scheme for successive fixed-term contracts is limited and will run out on 31 December 1997.

D

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes (with objective reason)
maximum duration : 18 months (unless objective reason)
renewable: yes (with objective reason)
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: no

Fixed-term contracts
Extension of authorisation of fixed-term jobs until 2000

DK

regulation: no
restrictions: no
maximum duration : no
renewable: yes
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: no

E

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : 36 months
renewable: yes
allowance at end of contract: yes
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

F

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : 18 months
renewable: twice
allowance at end of contract: yes
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

FIN

The law on employment contracts (Työsopimuslaki 320/70) section 2 sets out the circumstances in which fixed-term contracts are permitted, i.e. when required by the nature of the work, when the worker is standing in for someone, apprenticeship contracts etc., or any other valid reason cited by the employer and related to the mode of operation of the undertaking or the work to be performed. If a contract of this type is concluded for reasons other than those listed above, or in the event of repeated renewals without valid reason, the contract will be regarded as open-ended (125/84).

As an exception, the law on temporary derogations to section 2, paragraph 2, of the law on employment contracts (Laki väliaikaisista poikkeuksista työsopimuslain 2 §:n 2 mom. 1158/94) authorises the conclusion of fixed-term contracts with long-term unemployed persons, notwithstanding the aforementioned reasons.

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Fixed-term contracts

GR

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : no
renewable: twice
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

Conditions concerning the renewal of contracts, especially open-ended contracts (for people employed under the provisions of private law) and compensation are under review.

NL

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : no
renewable: yes, though with termination, unless there is a period of more than 31 days between contracts
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

I

regulation: yes (proposal in May 1995)
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : 6 months
renewable: no
allowance at end of contract: yes
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

P

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : 36 months
renewable: twice
allowance at end of contract: yes, two days' pay per full month's work over duration of contract
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

IRL

regulation: no
restrictions: no
maximum duration: no
renewable: yes
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: no

S

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : no general limit
renewable: yes, up to a certain limit
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

There are also restrictions as to the situations in which fixed-term contracts are allowed, ie the special nature of the work. Fixed-term contracts necessitated by the special nature of the work may last up to 6 months over 2 years.

L

regulation: yes
restrictions: yes
maximum duration : 24 months
renewable: twice
allowance at end of contract: no
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

UK

regulation: no
restrictions: no
maximum duration : no
renewable: yes
allowance at end of contract: no (an allowance may be payable under the contract).
possibility of open-ended contract: yes

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Retirement and early retirement

Statutory retirement age is normally 65 (60 in I and F, 67 in DK and S), but sometimes differs for women (60/55). The minimum period of contributions and pension amount vary considerably in the EU. During the 1970s and early 1980s retirement age came down, but has now stabilised or even gone up. In Germany, for example, the plan is for retirement age gradually to rise. Early retirement is available everywhere, though age restrictions and pensions vary. Recently, the possibilities have been limited by raising ages or employers' contributions to the costs.

DK

Minimum period of contributions: at least three years' residence

Statutory retirement age: 67

Amount: between 52% and 60% of earnings

Cumulation with earnings: subject to certain conditions

Early retirement: possible for persons over 50 for social or health reasons.
Persons of over 60 can, furthermore, take an interim pension until they reach pensionable age (67), as long as they have belonged to an unemployment fund for 20 years within the past 25 years or 10 years within the past 15 years and provided that membership has not been interrupted during the period between 31 March 1992 and the date on which the early-retirement pension starts.

A

1. RETIREMENT AND EARLY RETIREMENT

E

Minimum period of contributions: 15 years
Statutory retirement age: 65
Amount: between 60% and 100% of earnings
Cumulation with earnings: no
Early retirement: at 64, with 100% of entitlements and possibility of early retirement pension financed by conversion plans.

B

Minimum period of contributions: none
Statutory retirement age: between 60 and 65
Amount: between 47% and 73% of earnings
Cumulation with earnings: subject to certain conditions

arly retirement: possible under collective agreements – minimum age 58 – the person taking early retirement is entitled to unemployment benefit and a supplementary amount paid by the last employer and must be replaced by a wholly unemployed person receiving unemployment benefit

Sectoral collective agreements covering the period 1.1.95 to 31.12.96 may provide for the introduction of an early retirement scheme for workers aged 55 and over who have been in employment for 33 years.

F

Minimum period of contributions: none

Statutory retirement age: 60

Amount: between 46% and 88% of earnings

Cumulation with earnings: possible

Early retirement: funded by the State from the age of 57 years (in special cases from the age of 56) and subject to certain conditions, principally with regard to the period of contributions.

D

Minimum period of contributions: 60 months

Statutory retirement age: 65, in principle

Amount: depending on length of contributions
Cumulation with earnings: possible

Early retirement: Men and women who have reached the age of 63 (or 60 in the event of occupational invalidity or unemployment for more than one year) and have paid insurance contributions for 35 years, or who have reached the age of 60 and have paid 180 months' contributions provided that they have been unemployed for one year during the past 18 months and have paid compulsory contributions for 8 of the past 10 years. For women aged 60 who have paid contributions for 180 months and have paid compulsory contributions for more than 1à years after the age of 40.

FIN

1. RETIREMENT AND EARLY RETIREMENT

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Retirement and early retirement

GR

Minimum period of contributions: 4 500 days of work (invalidity: 1500 days, death: 1500 days, work accident: from first day)

Statutory retirement age: 65 (60 for women insured up to 31.12.1992) or 60 for persons whose work is arduous or unhealthy (55 for women).

Amount: between 30% and 80% of earnings.

Cumulation with earnings: possible with monthly earnings limited to 50 times daily minimum earnings.

Early retirement: in general from 60 for men (55 for women) and 58 for construction industry workers.

NL

Minimum period of contributions: none

Statutory retirement age: 65

Amount: in addition to the statutory retirement pension (AOW), occupational pensions bring total pensions up to a maximum of 70% of earnings during the years preceding retirement (depending on number of years' service).

Cumulation with earnings: subject to certain conditions

Early retirement: may be provided for in sectoral or company collective agreements. There are provisions covering both full-time and part-time early retirement.

I

1. PENSION REFORM, RETIREMENT, AND EARLY RETIREMENT

P

Minimum period of contributions: 120 months
Statutory retirement age: men 65, women 63 (from 1 January 1994 gradual increase to 65 for women in steps of 6 months per year)
Amount: between 30 % and 80 % of earnings
Cumulation with earnings: possible
Early retirement

From the age of 60, for the unemployed and workers in companies in a difficulty economic situation or in the sectors undergoing restructuring (textiles/clothing, shipbuilding, mining, customs). For ECSC industry workers from the age of 55.
Where early retirement follows prolonged unemployment, income based on contributions paid is assumed up to the age of 60 to avoid an adverse effect on pension (Article 45 of D.L. n° 79-A of 13/13/89 as amended by D.L. n° 418 of 24.12.93).

IRL

Minimum period of contributions: 156 weeks

Statutory retirement age: 65

Amount: between 35% and 42% of earnings

Cumulation with earnings: no

Early retirement: an allowance is paid to long-term unemployed persons aged 55 or over subject to certain conditions.

S

Pensionable age: 65

Entitlement to early retirement pension: workers aged 61 - 64, following illness or physical or mental disability affecting work capacity.

Entitlement to partial retirement pension
Workers aged 16 - 64 who are engaged in economic activity and reduce their working hours. The worker must be resident in Sweden, must have worked at least 75 days over a minimum period of four months during the year immediately preceding retirement, and must have been in receipt, for 10 years since the age of 45, of a sufficient level of income to give entitlement to a supplementary pension. Working time in this case must be between 17 and 35 hours per week. The rate of compensation from 1994 is 55% of the former wage.

L

Minimum period of contributions: 120 months of effective insurance

Statutory retirement age: 65

Amount: between 46% and 78% of earnings

Cumulation with earnings: possible

Early retirement: from 57, subject to 480 months of effective insurance

UK

Minimum period of contributions: 2 contribution conditions must be satisfied: must have 1 qualifying year since 6 April 1975 derived from the actual payment of class 1, 2 or 3 National Insurance Contributions (NICs) OR have paid 50 flat rate NICs at any time before 6 April 1975; to have 100% basic pension, must have qualifying years for about 90% of the working life
Statutory retirement age: the state pension age is 60 for women and 65 for men.
Amount: depending on length of contributions.
Cumulation with earnings: possible through the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS).

Early retirement: payment of the state pension is not made before state pension age is reached. Occupational and private pensions may be paid before state pension age depending on the agreement between the employee and pension provider."

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Legal and contractual limitations to working time

With the exception of UK and DK, Member States' legislation lays down a maximum weekly working time. However, effective working time and overtime are normally determined by collective agreements.

DK

Statutory limit: no legislation regarding number of hours per week, which is fixed in collective agreements.

Overtime: regulated by collective agreements.

Leave: 30 days

A

Statutory limit: 40 hours per week
Collective agreement: 36 - 40 hours per week

Daily working time may be increased to 12 hours where it includes regular and lengthy periods of readiness time.

Overtime: 5 hours per week + 60 hours per calendar year, though not exceeding a total of 10 hours per week. Further overtime may be authorised by collective agreement or labour inspectorate decision.

E

Statutory limit: covered by collective agreement or employment contract. The maximum length cannot exceed 40 hours per week averaged over year.

Overtime: 80 hours per year.

Leave: 30 calendar days

B

Statutory limit: 40 hours per week. Collective agreements may stipulate shorter working times. The Draft Law on employment promotion and preventive measures to safeguard competitiveness provides that 39 working hours a week will be made the statutory norm from 1 January 1999.

Overtime: 65 hours per quarter, compensatory leave to be taken by the end of the quarter, except where there is a sectoral collective agreement stating that a maximum of 65 hours per quarter may be paid at overtime rates instead.

Leave: 20 calendar days + 10 public holidays

F

Statutory limit: 39 hours per week. Many exceptions for the various sectors.

Overtime: 9 hours per week or 130 hours per year, or more if included in a collective agreement.

Leave: 30 calendar days

D

Statutory limit: 48 hours per week. Weekly working time has been amended by collective agreements in all sectors.

Overtime: 2 hours per day over a period of 6 months or 24 weeks, provided that the average working day does not exceed 8 hours.

Leave: from Jan 1995 uniformly 24 days in all Bundesländer; 5-6 weeks under collective agreements.

FIN

Statutory limit: 40 hours per week. Possibility of derogations through national collective agreements and within certain limits also lower level agreements if the national/sectoral collective agreement contains provisions for derogations.

Overtime: maximum annual overtime 330 hours (= 250 hours + 80 hours by shop-floor agreements)

Leave: 2 days/month, after 1 year of service 30 days.

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Legal and contractual limitations to working time

GR

Statutory limit: 5-day, 40-hour week.

Overtime: 3 hours per day, 18 hours per week or 150 hours per year (private sector).

Leave: up to 24 calendar days.

NL

Statutory limit: 48 hours per week; collective agreements: 36 - 40 hours.

Overtime: no general legislation.

Leave: 4 calendar weeks; normally 5 weeks by collective agreement.

I

Statutory limit: 48 hours. National collective agreements (branch level) generally stipulate a statutory limit of 40 hours in industry and 36 hours in the public service.

Overtime: stipulated in sectoral collective agreements.

Leave: no specific number of calendar days; 4-6 weeks by collective agreement.

P

Statutory limit: 44 hours per week (42 hours for office workers). Possibility of including working time in collective agreements (max. 50 hours per week). Wide use is made of this possibility at branch level (reduction and reorganisation of working time).

Overtime: 2 hours per day or 200 hours per year (no limit in cases of force majeure or serious risk to the company).

Leave: 22 calendar days.

IRL

Statutory limit: 48 hours per week. Possibility of regulating working time by collective agreement.
There are differences between certain sectors (retail trade, catering, etc.) and also for young people.

Overtime: 2 hours per day, 12 hours per week or 240 hours per year (young people 2 hours per day, 10 hours per week or 200 hours per year).

Leave: 3 calendar weeks; 4 weeks by collective agreement.

S

Statutory limit: 40 hours per week. Possibility of derogations through collective agreements.

Overtime: 48 hours per 4-week period or 50 hours per calendar month, with a maximum of 200 hours per year.

Leave: 25 calendar days (statutory provisions, more according to some collective agreements).

L

Statutory limit: 40 hours per week. Possibility of derogations by collective agreement (very rare).

Overtime: 2 hours per day. Total daily working time may not exceed 10 hours, except for urgent work (e.g. accidents, force majeure).

Leave: 25 calendar days; 26-28 days by collective agreement.

UK

Statutory limit: No general legislation on working time, which is a matter for agreement between employers and employees and their representatives.

Overtime: by agreement between employers and employees and their representatives.

Leave: no legislation; for agreement between employers and employees or their representatives. Nearly 40% of full-time employees receive 20-25 days' annual leave.

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Arrangement of working patterns

The arrangement of working patterns has become an important issue in labour market flexibility policy. Both legislation and collective agreements already offer wide scope for working time flexibility. In Germany, for example, the reduction of working time in the steel industry to 35 hours goes hand in hand with greater flexibility. In F and UK annualisation is possible.

A

The arrangement of working time is in many cases provided for under collective agreements. Statutory working hours may, for example, be increased or reduced within a given calculation period.

B

The Draft Law on employment promotion and preventive measures to safeguard competitiveness provides that the calculation of working time on an annual basis will also be possible in large firms by means of a simple amendment to employment regulations (as is already the case in SMEs).

D

The law on working time states that daily working time may be extended without special reason to 10 hours, as long as the average over 24 weeks does not exceed 8 hours (longer periods may be fixed by collective agreement).

DK

E

Working day: flexibility can be collectively negotiated, covering annualisation of working time, irregular distribution of the working day, and possibility of exceeding the maximum of 9 hours per day.

Overtime: the minimum supplement of 75% of the hourly rate has been abolished. In the absence of an agreement, remuneration of overtime is replaced by time off in lieu.

Weekly rest-period: the weekly rest-period of 1 and a half days can be accumulated to a maximum of 14 days. There are also special arrangements for working days, daily and weekly rest-periods by sector and specific activities which allow a flexible daily work patterns.

F

The law authorises companies to introduce a wide range of measures to increase flexibility, after negotiations with the trade unions concerned. These include:
- increasing or reducing employees' working time in accordance with changes in the amount of work, while continuing to calculate pay on the basis of average working time;
- possibility of varying working time depending on the day of the week;
- possibility of shift work in order to increase the time during which work equipment is used;
- annualisation of part-time work;
- possibility of derogations to the ban on Sunday working in industry and the services sector.

FIN

The law on working time (Työaikalaki 604/46) lists the types of company and activity where the employer may decide to organise statutory working time on the basis of working in periods. In such cases statutory working time is either 80 hours per 2-week period or 120 hours per 3-week period.
The decision making powers at the level of the work-place have been increased. More than before collective agreements include possibilities according to which time arrangements may be agreed at the workplace.

Employers and workers may agree on flexible working time in a form which allows workers to decide when to start and finish work, within agreed limits. The employer must prepare a schedule for each workplace, listing starting and finishing times, rest and meal breaks, working time bands, reference periods, the maximum and minimum working day, accumulation of working hours, and periods when presence is compulsory. It is possible to save part of annual leave and accumulate it to be spent as longer leave period in a future time.

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Arrangement of working patterns

GR

- 4th shift for full-time employees in enterprises
- part-time employment (law 892/90)
- operation of enterprises and shop/tourost areas, especially under summer regulation
- adjustments concerning the operations of enterprises, including weekends

NL

An amendment to the law on working time has introduced the following provisions: average working time of 40 hours per week or 520 hours per 13 weeks, with a maximum of 9 hours per day and 45 hours per week.
Changes possible by collective agreement or decision by the works council, up to 10 hours per day, 200 hours per 4 weeks or 585 hours per 13 weeks. Compulsory resting time: 11 hours per day.
This bill offers more scope for agreement-based relations, combining the possibility of more flexible working time (night or weekend work etc.) with continued protection for workers (health and safety etc.).
Flexibility measures include extension of shop opening times, extension of employer's obligation to provide information to explanation of the type of contract, a statutory ban on discrimination based on the length of working time, and a proposal for a minimum working time of three hours on request, and a proposal for flexibilisation of parental leave.

I

P

Different working time periods may be fixed by collective agreement.

IRL

Usually decided at company level, and largely dependent on the company's economic situation.
A service responsible for company partnerships has recently been established within the Department of Enterprise and Employment to help employers and workers in every company create an environment providing for more flexibility in work organisation as well as ongoing development with a view to maintaining and boosting competitiveness.

S

Possibility of derogations from the provisions of the law on the arrangement of working patterns through collective agreements at national or local level.
Possibility of derogations on overtime and night resting time for short periods (up to one month) through local collective agreements. Derogations covering a longer period require a collective agreement at national level.

L

In the tripartite agreement of 8.3.1994 on the maintaining of employment, price stability and business competitiveness, the social partners declared that future policy in respect of agreements to be concluded would be to encourage forms of work organisation likely to respond to the need to maintain and even create jobs.

UK

Working arrangements are a matter for employers and employees to agree in the light of their particular circumstances. They vary considerably and may be the subject of collective agreements. For example, nearly 1.5 million workers are covered by annualised hours arrangements (for which there are no statutory requirements).

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Work sharing

Work sharing is an important feature of employment policy above all in B, F, I and DK. Different models exist: work-sharing grants, leave (e.g. sabbatical), part-time work, etc. Other countries (including D) are expecting to create new jobs by a general reduction of working time in certain sectors.

DK

All members of an unemployment insurance fund covered by a work-sharing plan are entitled to reduced (supplementary) allocations subject to certain conditions (collective agreement, minimum of two full days a week, etc.).

A

No statutory provisions.

E

B

The possibilities under the career breaks scheme have been broadened by means of new types of part-time career breaks and the introduction of arrangements benefiting the employer whereby his contributions are reduced to compensate for the extra expense involved in taking on a replacement; the maximum period of a career break in the public sector has also been extended.

F

The law of 11 June 1996 provides for the payment of subsidies to companies which:
- reduce working time by at least 10% and at the same time recruit at least 10% more workers, with no staff cuts for at least two years,
- avoid redundancies dictated by economic considerations, by concluding a works agreement reducing working time by at least 10%.

In both cases the company benefits from a variable and diminishing reduction in social security contributions of between 50 and 30% for a period of seven years.

D

FIN

Measures have been introduced entitling all members of an unemployment insurance fund (työttömyyskassa) working part-time to a reduced daily allowance, subject to certain conditions. An experiment with a view to increasing flexibility is in progress (1994-95). It allows anyone accepting a part-time job to obtain partial compensation for loss of earnings from the employment service. The objective is to persuade people in full-time jobs to accept part-time work for a limited period (minimum one year) so that they can be replaced by an unemployed person.

Several working-time reorganization experiments have been launched in 1995-96 (in industry and the municipal sector) on 6+6 hours shift work arrangements on voluntary basis. The Government has in May 1996 given green light to proceed with agreements with 20 municipalities to try the 6 + 6 hours model in the public sector for two years.

An experiment on switch-leave is taking place in 1996-98 (laki vuorottelu-vapaakokeilusta 1663/95). About 1000 workers have used this possibility during the first three months.

Work sharing

GR Adjustments promoting work sharing according to law 1892/90 are possible through collective agreements.

NL Part-time work is the most common model of work-sharing. In many sectors (public as well as private) the number of working hours has been reduced to a maximum of 32, 36 or 38 per week by collective agreement. Arrangements for paid and unpaid leave are incorporated in some collective agreements.

I Draft legislation proposes the introduction of job sharing

P Possibility of recruiting unemployed persons to work alongside workers less than four years from retirement, in order to encourage recruitment and transfer of expertise (Portaria n° 247 of 29.3.95)

IRL Work sharing in the public service: the system allows two civil servants to share a post with the approval of management. They receive half pay and other benefits. The scheme is voluntary, and sharing arrangements must be for at least one year.
A recent study of work sharing has provided a basis for an assessment of the progress of certain initiatives.

S

L

UK There are no statutory restrictions in the UK, where some 150 000 employees share jobs. Work sharing measures in the UK are a matter for agreement between employers and the workers and individuals concerned. The UK Government policy aims to reduce barriers to flexible working which suit both employees and employers and to encourage the wide range of types and patterns of work available in the UK.

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Part-time contracts

A general trend in the regulation of part-time contracts can be identified: although statutory provisions and even definitions vary between Member States, equal rights with full-time workers (on a pro rata basis) is a universal objective.

DK

There is no legal definition of part-time work. Nor is it defined in collective agreements. Generally speaking, a part-time worker is anyone who works less than normal collectively-agreed working time.
The rules on part-time employment differ significantly from one collective agreement to another, making it impossible to give a general overview of how part-time employment is organised.
Nor does legislation contain rules specifically covering persons in part-time employment. Regulation is therefore by individual or collective agreement.

A

The law on working time (Arbeitszeitgesetz) defines a part-time contract as one which stipulates a working week which is shorter than the statutory limit or the time fixed in the relevant collective agreement.
Various rules set out in the law protect part-time workers against discrimination compared with full-time workers. The employer is not allowed to change a part-time worker's working time without his or her consent. Part-time workers also have the same rights as full-time workers in respect of pay, bonuses and all other conditions of employment.
A 5-year period of part-time employment has little or no effect on pensions, which in Austria are calculated on the basis of the best 15 years of contributions.

E

An employment contract is considered to be part-time if it sets a daily, weekly, monthly or annual length of working time less than the normal length for the sector of activity in question. A worker is also regarded as part-time where he or she, being within 3 years of retirement, reduces daily working time by 50%, the rest of the job being done by another worker (job-sharing). A part-time contract must describe the nature of the contract, its duration, and the number of hours or days to be worked, and must be registered with the public employment service.
Remuneration is proportional to that of a full-time worker, and part-time workers enjoy the same rights and benefits laid down by the law or collective agreements as full-time workers. Social security contributions are calculated on the basis of working time, and social protection rights are reduced where working time is less than 12 hours per day or 48 hours per month.

B

A right to do part-time work has been established for workers who have already made full use of the possibilities of part-time career breaks (same working arrangement); this right is coupled with protection against dismissal.
The position of part-time workers has been improved under unemployment insurance arrangements.
The Draft Law on employment promotion and preventive measures to safeguard competitiveness provides for a simplification of administrative formalities concerning the employment of part-time workers with flexible working hours.

F

Considered as part-time workers are those who work less than 1/5 of the weekly, monthly or annual legal or contractual working limit. A part-time contract may be concluded at the initiative of either the worker or the employer, must be in written form, and must cover certain specific points (pay, classification, working hours, etc.). Remuneration is proportional to that of a full-time employee performing comparable work. Part-time workers enjoy their full rights. Depending on the collective agreement, overtime must not exceed one tenth or one third of agreed working time.

D

Specific legal regulation in the 1985 employment promotion act (eg the definition of equal treatment). Otherwise the general labour regulation is in force.

FIN

There is no definition of a part-time contract. Legislation on employment contracts, periods of notice, redundancy pay etc. applies equally to full-time and part-time workers. Part-time workers do not suffer disadvantages in terms of health insurance or health care entitlement, as benefits are linked to residence.
Retirement pension is calculated on the basis of the length of employment periods and level of earnings.
The employer may, having given notice, unilaterally convert an employment contract into a part-time contract from the end of the period of notice, subject to conditions similar to those applicable to the termination of employment contracts (723/88).

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Part-time contracts

GR

Part-time work has recently been regulated by Law No 1892/1990. A part-time contract must be in writing, and may be open-ended or fixed-term. The law stipulates equal treatment for part-time and full-time workers, allowing for the shorter working time. It does not stipulate a minimum or maximum working time, and the contracting parties have complete freedom in this matter. Replacement of a full-time job by a part-time one is subject to certain conditions: i) dismissal of a worker because he or she refuses to accept part-time employment is prohibited; ii) a part-time worker must be given priority when full-time workers are to be recruited; iii) a part-time worker has the right to refuse to work overtime if he or she has another job or family responsibilities. Collective autonomy is relatively important, given that all the statutory provisions on part-time employment laid down by the law may be modified or supplemented by collective agreements.

NL

There is no legal definition of part-time work. Nor is it defined in collective agreements. Generally speaking, part-time worker is anyone who works less than normal collectively agreed working time. According to this description, the percentage of part-time workers is very high (30% in total, 60% of women). Legislation contains binding requirements regarding equal treatment for full-time and part-time workers.

I

Part-time work is very vaguely defined as where working time is less than that normally stipulated by collective agreement. It is subject to the general provisions of labour law and collective agreements.
Employees willing to work part-time may ask to be entered in special placement lists. Contracts must be in writing, describe the job and stipulate working hours. A copy must be sent to the provincial labour inspectorate. Changes from full-time to part-time employment are subject to written agreement between the two parties and rakfication by the provincial labour inspectorate. A change from full-time employment to part-time employment must be covered by a written agreement between the parties, ratified by the provincial employment office. A contract may be converted from full-tim to part-time at the employer's request. Overtime is prohibited unless provided for by collective agreements.
Recently, Law No 451/94 has introduced certain advantages in terms of the contributions payable by companies offering part-time contracts.

P

Most labour legislation applies equally to both full-time work. However, the law on working time states that collective agreements should, if possible, include provisions on the subject and establish priorities for access to part-time work for women with family responsibilities, disabled workers and workers who are also students.
In general, working time is equivalent to half of normal working time.
The law also states that remuneration may not be less than the amount payable for full-time work for the same period.
The provisions on part-time employment are flexible. No special or official provisions are necessary for part-time contracts.

IRL

The 1991 Worker Protection Act defines regular part-time employees as persons working continuously for the same employer for at least eight hours a week, for at least 13 weeks. Otherwise, what is meant by full-time or part-time employment depends on what is recognised or agreed by the company, sector or industry in question.
Regular part-time employees are covered by legislative provisions on periods of notice, maternity leave, unfair dismissal, workforce participation, redundancy pay, protection in the event of the employer's insolvency and entitlement to leave. They are not at a disadvantage compared to full-time workers with regard to health and safety legislation, equality, remuneration and conditions of employment.

S

There is no specific definition of a part-time contract, which is covered by the same legislation on minimum periods of notice, redundancy pay and social insurance as a full-time contract (except that a part-time worker must work at least 17 hours a week to qualify for a partial pension and an average of 17 hours a week to be entitled to unemployment benefits.

L

The law of 26 February 1993 specifically deals with part-time employment. A part-time worker's contract must contain the same details as that of a full-time worker.
Part-time workers have the same statutory and agreement-based rights as full-time workers. Their remuneration is proportional to that of full-time employees performing comparable work.
Redundancy pay is calculated proportionally on the basis of the number of years worked.

UK

Part-time contracts are a matter for employers and employees to agree taking account of their individual preferences and possibilities. New regulations which entered into force in February 1995 give part-time workers the same statutory rights as full-time workers.

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Short-time working

As a means of contending with short-term economic crises, short-time working is particularly important in D, and also important in A, F and I. It is seen as a means of stabilising employment and safeguarding human capital during temporary economic difficulties, but is also used for structural adaptation purposes (e.g. in the former GDR). Finally, a long-term short-time working allowance has been introduced in F.

A

In the event of involuntary and temporary reduction of workload

Compensation for short-time working (Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe)
If the social partners or parties to a collective agreement have agreed on the introduction of short-time working (4 consecutive weeks with working time at least 20% less than normal), and in order to safeguard jobs threatened by temporary difficulties, companies receive an amount which allows them to make up part of the income losses suffered by the workers concerned.

Bad-weather allowance (Schlechtwetterentschädigung)
To avoid employment fluctuations in the construction industry, workers laid off as a result of bad weather (for a limited number of hours) receive an allowance equivalent to 60% of what they would otherwise have been paid. The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) reimburses the sums concerned to the company.

B

The regulations governing unemployment insurance provide for the granting of allowances to workers bound by a contract of employment which is temporarily, partially or wholly suspended for economic or technical reasons, or as a result of adverse weather conditions or force majeure (only the last of these concerns blue- and white-collar workers, the rest relate only to blue-collar workers).

D

Short-time allowance
Workers who have to reduce their level of activity for economic reasons or as a result of unavoidable circumstances receive a short-time allowance if, for example, at least a third of the workforce is affected and working hours are cut by more than 10%. The allowance is equivalent to 60% or 67% of their net lump-sum remuneration.

Promotion of employment in the construction industry
Workers in construction firms receive a winter allowance for any loss of work over and above 151 hours owing to adverse weather conditions during the "bad weather period" (1 January - 31 March and 1 November - 31 December). The winter allowance is equivalent to 60% or 67% of their net lump-sum remuneration. During the winter construction-promotion period (Förderungszeit) (1 January - 28/29 February and 15-31 December), construction workers receive a winter allowance of DM 2 for each hour worked during collectively agreed working time.

DK

E

Situation in which a worker loses a part-time job (if the working day was less than 12 hours per week or 48 hours per month, no protection) or sees his working time cut by at least 1/3 compared with normal working time, with proportional cut in pay. In this latter case, the amount of the allowance is proportional to the reduction in working time.

F

Companies faced with temporary economic difficulties may reduce their employees' working time through a short-time-working scheme.
Employees are paid an allowance of 50% of their gross hourly wage for each hour not worked. This allowance may in no case be lower than FF 29 per hour.
Up to a quota of 600 hours per employee per year, the company is paid a specific allowance from the State equal to FF 18 for each hour not worked.

FIN

A worker may take part-time leave (i.e. a reduction in the working week) for family reasons until his or her child enters primary education (at the age of 7), provided that both parents (or the single parent) have (has) been working outside the house, on a contract, for an continuous period of at least one year. Part-time leave for family reasons is granted only to one parent at a time.

Since 1994, anyone who does not work complete weeks (reduced week or day, part-time work, occasional full-time work for a period of less than one month, auxiliary work or activities compatible with receipt of unemployment benefit) may receive adjusted unemployment benefit.

In 1994 Finland had 28000 workers on a reduced working week, 23000 in 1995.

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Short-time working

GR By mutual agreement a compensation paid by the employer or rotation work fee can be paid according to the number of working days.

NL No specific definition; where working time is less than normal full-time working:
- Reduction of working time: companies which, for reasons other than the normal risks of business, are confronted with a temporary reduction in activity may, subject to certain conditions, apply for dispensation from the ban on reducing the working time of employees. Workers then receive, for the hours not worked, unemployment benefit (WW) of up to 70% of their last wage.
- Where insufficient work is available, employers and workers may agree on a suspension of wages.
- Unemployment benefit (WW) for workers in the event of bad weather.

I Law No 223/1991 on solidarity contracts constitutes an instrument for preventing redundancies and workforce reductions. A solidarity contract allows the social partners to sign a company agreement for a cut in hours and wages which may exceed 30% of collectively-agreed levels. The reduction in working time may be on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. The public authorities (through the Cassa Integrazione Guadagni) make quarterly payments (based on the reduction in hours) which are distributed equally between companies and workers. Solidarity contracts may be signed with the company's management by the trade-union representations or the main trade-union confederations at regional or national level. (Law No 236/93; Law No 451/94; Decree-Law No 300/96)

P Employment contracts may be suspended or working time reduced for economic, technological or other reasons. Workers are then entitled to compensation guaranteeing them a monthly income of at least 2/3 of their gross wage (1/3 paid by social security, 1/3 by the employer) and in no case less than the guaranteed minimum.

IRL Definition: where the number of days systematically worked during a working week is temporarily less than what is normal for the job concerned.

S According to the Child Care Leave Act, employees can shorten their working hours when their children are young.

L Reduction of working time or laying off for several days during the normal working week.

UK In certain circumstances "guarantee payments" are made to certain workers for whom no work is available on a day on which, according to their contract, they should normally be working. The amount and duration of these statutory payments are subject to annually reviewed ceilings.

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Partial retirement

The high cost of early retirement to the State, the desire of older workers not to break off from working life from one day to the next, and the fact that the retirement of experienced workers can be detrimental to their company have led to the introduction of partial early retirement schemes in many countries. The forerunners here are those countries in which work sharing plays a significant role in employment policy, e.g. France, Belgium and Denmark.

DK

A new partial early retirement programme (Delefterløn) was introduced on 1 January 1995. It covers workers aged between 60 and 66 who meet the conditions for the voluntary early retirement programme, i.e. who are entitled to claim unemployment benefit and have contributed to an insurance fund for 20 out of the last 25 years. Partial early retirement benefit amounts to DKK 58 per hour by which working time is reduced. Conditions: working time must be reduced by at least 1/4, but must not be less than 12 hours per week on average. The self-employed must not work more than 18.5 hours per week and must provide documentary evidence of their reduced working time.
The new scheme is administered by the unemployment insurance funds.

A

The gradual retirement scheme (Gleitpension) introduced on 1.7.1993 means that workers now have the opportunity to benefit from their pension entitlement earlier while continuing to work on a reduced scale. To do so they must meet all the specific conditions for early retirement after a long period of insurance (Vorzeitige Alterspension bei langer Versicherungsdauer). If they reduce their activity by at least 50% they are entitled to a graduated pension equivalent to 70% of their full pension. A reduction in working time of at least 30% gives entitlement to 50% of full pension.

Written agreement on part-time work.

E

A worker aged over 62 and eligible for a pension (other than because of age) may cut his or her working time by 50%, with a corresponding cut in pay, subject to an agreement with the employer. The employer undertakes to recruit an unemployed person as a replacement until the worker reaches full retirement age.

B

Employers are entitled to a reduction in their contributions for the person replacing a worker who has taken partial early retirement.

Redistribution of work in the public sector (law of 10 April 1995). Public-sector employees have the right to work part-time for a continuous period of no more than 5 years leading up to retirement (early or normal). During that period, in addition to their pay for part-time work, they are entitled to a monthly allowance of BFR 11 940. If two employees in the same department change to part-time work, they must be replaced by a statutory employee.

F

Progressive early retirement
Enables workers aged 55 or over to work part-time until they are entitled to a full retirement pension. Working time must average 50% of previous working time, but may vary between 80% and 20%.
During this period workers are paid by the company for the time they work and receive an allowance from the State equal to 30% of their previous wage.
An early retirement agreement may be concluded with a company which either is in economic difficulties and is looking to cut back its workforce or wishes to reduce the age pyramid of its workforce by recruiting young people or persons in other priority categories.

D

Pensions may be paid either in full or in part (1/3, 1/2 or 2/3 of full pension). In the case of partial pension, a supplementary allowance depending on the previous contributions basis may be payable.

FIN

Employed persons aged between 58 and 64 are by the Employment Pension Scheme entitled to a part-time pension provided they do not receive any other pension in their own right and they continue to work part-time (minimum 16 and maximum 28 hours a week, involving a pay cut between 35 % and 70% of their average earnings). They must have been employed full-time for at least 12 of the 18 months preceding the beginning of the pension. They must also have earned the earnings-related pension for at least five years out of the previous fifteen years.

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Partial retirement

GR

NL

Partial retirement may be provided for by collective agreement.

I

Law No 223/1991 introduces this possibility.

P

Workers aged at least 55 may conclude an early retirement agreement with their employer, under which they receive a sum not exceeding their last wage (minimum 25% thereof).

Early retirement may take the form of a suspension or reduction of work. The person concerned remains attached to the company, but may also take up another paid activity.

When the worker reaches statutory retirement age (65) and meets all the conditions for entitlement to a pension, early retirement status ends automatically and the worker is transferred to the old-age pension scheme.

IRL

S

See point 2.1.1.5

L

UK

No measures

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Leave for family reasons or for education

Practically all countries offer leave for family reasons (maternity), but training or education leave is rarer. The conditions for the granting of leave are very diverse, extending from the simple possibility of leave at the employer's discretion without financial compensation to an entitlement with substantial financial compensation. Nowadays, both parents may normally share parental leave. Denmark in particular has made parental, training and sabbatical leave an important part of its active employment policy, in anticipation of the positive effects of job sharing.

DK

1. PARENTAL, SABBATICAL AND STUDY LEAVE

A

Parental leave benefit (Karenzurlaubsgeld) for 22 months per family; 6 months' benefit are subject to the father taking parental leave for this minimum period. The benefit is independent of previous income; a condition for eligibility is that the parents have earned a prospective entitlement to unemployment benefit. Parental leave benefit currently amounts to OS 185.50 a day. Lone parents receive a supplement of OS 2 500 a month, which is repayable by the father. Part-time leave may be taken during the second year, in which case a third year of part-time leave may be taken with the employer's agreement. The father is entitled to parental leave only if the mother forgoes the right.

The law gives parents the right to childraising leave up to the child's second birthday. This leave may be divided between the parents. Minimum duration: 3 months. A worker may not be made redundant during or in the four weeks following childraising leave.

The legal right to education leave (Bildungsurlaub) is restricted to the members of the works council. Maximum duration: 3 weeks.

B

The minimum duration of a career break has been reduced to 3 months (from 6 months). In the public sector, the maximum duration of a career break has been altered to 6 years.

In the public sector, employees have a right to a career break. There is a limited right to a career break in the private sector. The arrangements for partial career breaks have been broadened: it is possible in this connection to reduce the work performed by 1/5, 1/4, 1/3 or 1/2 of the normal number of working hours of a full-time job. In addition, protection against dismissal, which already existed for workers taking a full-time career break, has been extended to cover workers taking a part-time career break.
Employers benefit from a reduction in the social security contributions they have to pay for the replacement for a worker taking a career break.
Amount of the "career break allowance": FB 11 830 a month for a complete career break or a proportionate amount for a reduction in work performed. The increased amount is paid if the break occurs during the three years after the birth of a second child.

D

Per family, until the child reaches the age of 36 months (or for 36 months following adoption of a child under 8). Payment of DM 600 per month for the first six months, then an earnings-linked allowance until the child reaches the age of 24 months. The parent taking leave may work up to 19 hours a week for any employer. The leave may be taken by the father or mother, or may be shared between them, in which case they may alternate no more than three times (e.g. the mother may take the first year, the father the second, and the mother the third).

For children born after the end of 1993, the parental leave allowance is income-related throughout the period of leave (previously all parents received DM 600 per month during the first six months of leave, regardless of income).

E

Unpaid leave up to 3 years to take care of a child (natural or adopted). During this period the worker maintains his right to take part in training organised by the employer. During the first year, return to post is guaranteed; after this there is the right to an equivalent post. Right to 1 hour (divisible in two parts) of leave of absence for breast-feeding of an infant up to 9 months or a reduction by half an hour of the working day. In cases where both parents work, the father also has the right to the reduction in the length of the working day. Workers employed in a company for 6 months (and 12 months in the economic sector in question) can request paid leave for training with a maximum of 150 hours. If the company refuses, it is obliged to justify its reason.

F

Until the child reaches the age of 36 months. Employers with fewer than 100 employees may refuse to grant leave, after consulting the works council, if they consider it detrimental to production and the running of the company. Leave may be taken by the father, mother or both in turn. No allowance, except for the third child, when a flat-rate sum of FF 2 871 per month is paid, slightly more than the guaranteed minimum income (SMIC); this may be paid for half the year prior to the child's third birthday if the parent is working part-time or attending a remunerated vocational training course.

FIN

1. PARENTAL LEAVE
2. STUDY LEAVE

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Leave for family reasons or for education

GR Each parent is entitled to three months' full-time unpaid leave. This individual right cannot be transferred between the parents. Single parents are entitled to six months' leave. Employers may refuse such leave if more than 8% of their workers apply for it during the same year. Maternity benefit is paid by IKA. Complementary benefit up to total amount of salary is paid by Manpower Employment Organisation. Birth allowance is paid fro minimum 200 days of work during last 2 years.

NL Each parent is entitled to work reduced hours (minimum 20 hours a week) for a period of six months. Parents may make use of this possibility at any time up to the child's fourth birthday. The right to work reduced hours may not be transferred between parents, and there is no compensation for loss of earnings, unless provided for by collective agreement (eg 75% of wage for 50% of the working time) or in the case of single parents whose income falls below the social aid threshold as a result of working reduced hours, when compensation will be paid to boost earnings to that threshold.

I Six months, following maternity leave, to be taken before the child's first birthday.
Leave is primarily intended for the mother, but she may transfer part or all of it to the father. Payment amounts to 30% of earnings.

For parents of a severely disabled child, leave may be extended up to the child's third birthday, with an allowance of 30% of earnings, or may be taken in the form of two hours' paid leave per day.

P The working father or mother is entitled to 6-24 months unpaid leave, to be taken *immediately* after maternity leave.

Workers (but not managerial staff) with a child under 12 or a disabled child are entitled to work part-time. There is no compensation for loss of earnings.

Maternity leave: 98 days (Article 9 of Law n° 4/84 of 5/4), 100% of average gross earnings.

Training leave: unpaid paid.

IRL The career break is well established in the public sector. The system allows civil servants to take special unpaid leave (min. 6 months, max. 5 years) to bring up children or for other domestic reasons, training or travel abroad. Civil servants wishing to return to work after a career break are assigned to the first available vacant post, with a guarantee that they will be re-employed within 12 months.

S Since January 1995 450 days per family: 300 days at 80% (75% from January 1996) of earnings, followed by 60 days at 90% (85% from January 1996), 30 days of which may only be taken by the father and the other 30 only by the mother), and then 90 days at a flat rate of SEK 60 per day. The father is only entitled to 10 days in connection with the birth of a child. Paid leave may be taken on a full-time, half-time and quarter-time basis. For a multiple birth, paid leave is extended by 90 days at 90% of earnings and 90 days at SEK 60 per working day. Parental benefit is also paid for parents taking care of a sick child (60 days per year). There is also a right to leave for care of a seriously ill close relative (30 days per year). A daily benefit is paid from the sickness fund.

Individuals who have been employed for a minimum of 6 months are entitled to educational leave of absence. The period for the leave of absence depends on the length of study, but have no other restrictions.

L None

UK Arrangements are determined by employers and employees in the light of their particular circumstances and needs.

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Minimum wage

A statutory minimum wage exists in five European Union countries (E, F, L, NL, P). In most others (except UK, where the wage councils responsible for fixing minimum pay levels have been abolished) minimum levels are laid down in agreements. Statutory systems may include automatic indexing. Introduced to boost incomes at the bottom end of the pay scale and avoid competition between firms based on "wage-dumping", the minimum wage is today sometimes seen as a barrier to the recruitment of low-skilled workers (particularly young people). This negative consequence of the minimum wage depends mainly on the effective proportion of the labour force it affects and the manner in which it develops with inflation.

A

No statutory minimum wage. Collective agreements lay down minimum standards.

B

Collective labour agreement No 21 of 15 May 1975 defined a minimum wage for the first time. Since then, this agreement has been amended and coordinated several times, particularly by collective agreement No 43(d) of 13 July 1993.

D

No statutory minimum wage. The main function of collective agreements is to establish minimum standards. There are no indexing arrangements.

DK

No statutory minimum wage, but minimum wages are included in all collective agreements and apply to all workers aged 18 or over and all part-time workers regardless of whether they work more or less than 15 hours.

E

The constitution recognises the right to a minimum wage without discrimination between men and women. An all-industry minimum wage exists, which is reviewed annually. It is lower for workers under 18.

F

The purpose of the statutory minimum wage (SMIC) is to uphold the purchasing power of the lowest wages and ensure the participation of all employees in the nation's economic development. The SMIC is increased periodically either by Decrees in Cabinet or by Ministerial Order:
- obligatorily on 1 July each year, to ensure an annual increase in its purchasing power equivalent to at least half of the increased purchasing power of the hourly wage rate;
- automatically when the official consumer prices' index (excluding tobacco) increases by at least 2%, the SMIC is then adjusted upwards in the same proportion;
- whenever by governement decision dictated by social and economic considerations.

FIN

There is no statutory minimum wage. Minimum terms of employment, including wages, are laid down in collective agreements. Where a generally applicable collective agreement is in force in a particular sector, all employers are bound to comply with the terms it lays down regarding wages and employment. This system was introduced by the law on employment contracts (Tyosopimuslaki, 320/70, art. 17).

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Minimum wage

GR The national minimum wage is negotiated between the General Confederation of Labour and the main employers' organisation across the country. It applies directly to all employees in the private sector without the need for ministerial intervention. Public sector pay levels are established by ministerial decision in accordance with the government's minimum wage policy. Under the latest national agreement, for the period 1995-96, minimum wages in the private sector will perhpas increase by around the rate of inflation, and below this rate in the public sector. The statutory indexing system was abolished as from 1.1.91, after being in force for nine years.

NL Standard statutory minimum wage; indexing on the basis of average trends in collectively-agreed wages in the public and private sectors, with the possibility of derogations in the event of a deterioration in the ratio between active and non-active persons. For young people, the minimum wage depends on age.

I The minimum wage is laid down in collective agreements signed in each sector of industry every 3 - 4 years. Until July 1992 the "mobile scale" operated ('contigenza' or 'scala mobile'), providing automatic wage indexing. Since its abolition a gap has developed between wage negotiations in small and very small undertakings on the one hand (no agreements) and large and medium-sized concerns on the other hand (where there is a long tradition of wage negotiations at company level). Decree-law No 300/96 makes provision for certain rules on contracts for the realignment of employees' pay to the levels laid down in the corresponding collective labour agreements.

P Statutory multi-sectoral minimum wage. Lower rates apply to domestic staff, young people, apprentices and workers with reduced capacity.

The statutory minimum wage is reviewed at the beginning of the year, taking account of inflation forecasts and anticipated increases in productivity.

IRL No statutory minimum wage. Certain jobs/sectors are covered by Joint Labour Committees consisting of employers' and trade-union representatives, with a chairman appointed by the State. JLCs fix binding wages and terms of employment for the sectors and jobs concerned. It is estimated that they cover 9% of the labour force, mostly women.

S No statutory minimum wage. Minimum wages are in principle fixed in branch agreements concluded as part of collective bargaining.

L The Grand-Ducal decree of 30/12/44 introduced the concept of a minimum social wage. Equality between women and men from the point of view of minimum wage has existed since 1963. The minimum social wage is adjusted on the basis of the consumer price index in the same way as wages. The law of 26/07/86, amended in 1989, introduced the right to a guaranteed monthly minimum wage, which is calculated taking account of the make-up of the applicant's household.

UK No statutory national minimum wage. In 1993 the Wages Councils, which laid down minimum wages in certain sectors, were abolished. Statutory minimum rates for agricultural workers are fixed by three Agricultural Wages Boards, one for England and Wales, one for Scotland and one for N. Ireland. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is responsible for ensuring application of Agricultural Wages Orders in England and Wales. The Scottish Office and the N. Ireland Office perform a similar function for those respective parts in the UK.

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Wage negotiation

There are various levels of wage negotiation in the Member States: centralised (national multi-sectoral level), branch level, company level and individual. There is a general trend (though with variations between countries) from centralised negotiations towards branch and especially company negotiations. The aim is to standardise wage trends within a sector or company. On the other hand, centralised wage restraint mechanisms have been introduced (see 2.2.3).

DK

Legislation plays a relatively limited role, mainly because the majority of workers and employers are members of unions or associations. There are many collective agreements between workers' organisations and employers' associations or individual employers.

A

As a general rule the parties to collective agreements (the Wirtschaftskammer Osterreichs for employers, the unions in the Osterreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund for the workers) establish minimum wages for the various branches of activity, at either national or regional level.

E

One of the main features of reform is the encouragement given to collective bargaining. The first aim is to help negotiating committees to conclude agreements, hence the new rules on the authority of the company to hold negotiations relating to a higher level than the company, the composition of the negotiating committee, and the prior conditions for the signing of an agreement. Another aspect of the reform is to give collective agreements more scope to determine their own contents so that the results achieved by the social partners are tailored to their area of application and the prevailing conditions. Agreements therefore include rules on non-application to wage matters in particular with relation to companies (whose economic stability could be affected), to their termination and applicability of the previous agreement and the rights recognised under it, as well as the possibility of extending their validity for a longer period than initially agreed.

B

The Draft Law on employment promotion and preventive measures to safeguard competitiveness provides for a new wage-monitoring procedure which allows wage developments to be aligned to those in Belgium's main trading partners, namely France, Germany and the Netherlands.
Each year, the Central Economic Council will issue a report on the maximum available margins for increases in wage costs in nominal terms; on the basis of this report, the social partners will then lay down the maximum available margin for increases as well as employment measures for the next 2 years under their multi-sector agreement. (If the social partners are unable to agree on this, the government will itself stipulate the margin.)
Finally, using the twin approach of minimum increases based on fixed wage-scales and changes in the cost-of-living index and maximum increases equivalent to the margin provided for in the multi-sector agreement, collective agreements will be concluded at sector and company level. Mechanisms for corrective changes along the way are planned. In addition, penalties may be imposed if the wage standard is not adhered to. For 1996, 0.20% of the wage bill be used to promote employment for risk groups.

F

Every year employer and employee unions negotiate wages at company level.

D

In view of the problems associated with labour market policy, the social partners have made job security the main theme of collective bargaining. Collective agreements therefore include wage restraint arrangements, together with various options at company level (flexible working hours) and shorter working time without wage compensation in order to safeguard jobs.

Special arrangements for newly recruited workers, in particular low initial pay rates for long-term unemployed persons, have been adopted in the chemical and paper industries.

Wage trends. Development of joint agreements: average rise of 3.4% in the old Länder and 6.4% in the new Länder.

FIN

Pay scales are fixed at national level by collective bargaining. The large trade-union organisations conclude framework agreements which give rise to sectoral agreements. A collective agreement has to be in writing and must be available for consultation at the premises of the labour inspectorate (työsuojelupiiri) and the trade-union organisations.

The parties to a collective agreement may draw up binding conditions applicable to employment contracts and industrial relations. An employer bound by collective agreement must observe its minimum conditions. Legislation states that the provisions of collective agreements must be complied with even with regard to non-unionized workers, unless they are specifically excluded.

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Wage negotiation

GR Wages are fixed each year through negotiations and arrangements between the public and private sector representatives and the government. Collective agreements are also possible between sectors and enterprises. Wages increased in 1995 by 7% in the private sector and by 5.3% in the public sector.

NL Branch or company negotiations are dominant. Multi-sectoral wage agreements contain recommendations covering a whole range of subjects, which are then put into more specific terms in sectoral and company collective agreements. Wage restraint is a central theme, as is the trend towards shorter and more flexible working time.

I The situation has changed significantly since 1992, a historic first agreement having marked the abolition of the mobile scale system (automatic wage indexing).
In future the mobile scale will be replaced by a dual system of sectoral and company agreements. The agreement of 3.7.93 establishes the basis of a new system of industrial relations. In particular, contract renewals will have to make provision for pay increases for employees in line with the programmed inflation ceiling (3% for the first half of 1996).

P Collective agreements lay down monthly minimum wages for workforce categories in sectors or companies. In principle they are reviewed annually. They may, by ministerial order, be extended to companies and workers not affiliated to the signatory associations.

IRL A system of voluntary collective bargaining exists whereby agreements can be concluded at local or national level. Since 1988 centralised agreements valid for three years have been negotiated, the trend being towards wage restraint. The present Programme for Competitiveness and Work covers the period 1994-1996.

S The government does not intervene. In principle, wages are fixed by agreements resulting from collective bargaining at central, sectoral or company level. Individual agreements are also possible.

L Automatic adjustment of wages and salaries pegged to the consumer price index. Changes in the structure and weighting of the list of reference items are subject to a Grand-Ducal regulation.
Wage negotiations between the social partners.

UK The government has encouraged decentralisation of wage-fixing mechanisms and the introduction of flexible pay arrangements tailored to performance and local labour market conditions. The 1980s saw a steady shift from collective wage fixing to individual agreements. Employers have been able to adopt the Government's statutory profit-related pay schemes which offer significant tax-relief.

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Wage restraints

Several wage restraint mechanisms have been introduced through legislation or as part of agreements between the social partners. However, while the general tendency is towards moderation (even though wage trends follow short-term economic developments), it seems to be less obvious in decentralised systems.

DK

A

In 1995 nominal gross wages for the employed rose by 3.8%, consumer prices rose by 2.2%. With an increase in productivity for those in gainful employment of 2.1%, real wage development lags behind productivity growth.

E

Collective bargaining takes place at both national and decentralised levels.

Reversing the trends of the last few years, the most recent wage increases under collective agreements have been very moderate. Wage increases through agreements were 3.7% in 1994 and 3.9% on 1995, the rate of inflation was 4.3% in 1995.

B

The Draft Law on employment promotion and preventive measures to safeguard competitiveness provides for a new wage-monitoring procedure (see section 2.2.2). The freezing of wages and other income under the global plan will continue until the end of 1996.

F

According to a Ministry of Labour Study, the slowing down of wage increases, which started in 1991, continued in 1993.

D

The social partners negotiate wages taking account of the specific characteristics of each branch and region. A "spill-over" phenomenon is sometimes observed between them, which can bring about inflationary pressures as a result of the transmission of wage increases from very productive sectors to inefficient ones.

In general, if negotiations between employers and workers on the renewal of a collective agreement reach deadlock, a conciliation procedure is adopted. A distinction must be made between agreement-based conciliation and conciliation through the public authorities. In the first case the social partners are themselves committed to start the conciliation process before the start of a dispute. The public authorities become involved only where there is no conciliation agreement between the social partners or if the agreement-based process fails to achieve a positive result and the social partners then turn to a State conciliation service.

FIN

A comprehensive and centralized incomes policy settlement, the essential elements of which includes cross-board low pay increases, reduction in interest rates and inflation suppression, was concluded on 29 September 1995 for two years. This covers all wage-earners (public and private sectors). In industry wages were raised in November 1995 by 1,8 % and in October 1996 the general pay rise will be 1,3 %.

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Wage restraints

GR

The government presented its public-sector incomes policy in 1993, one of the main features being a 4% wage rise, which meant a cut in real income terms.
In March 1994 wage negotiations in the private sector resulted in the signing of a two-year collective agreement, with provision for a nominal wage increase of 5% on 1/1/1994, an additional rise of 6.5% on 1/7/1994, and a compensatory increase on 1/7/1995 if inflation exceeded 11.5% in 1994.

NL

Multi-sectoral recommendations on integrating the long-term unemployed and minorities. Wage restraint is regarded as an important factor in employment growth.

It is vital to maintain wage restraint. Unemployment is concentrated at the lower end of the labour market, which will also be the focal point of the reduction in social security contributions scheduled for 1996-8.
Measures provided for in the 1994 government agreement:
- introduction of a statutory minimum wage exemption for the long-term unemployed;
- adaptation of the practice of giving general currency to binding collective agreements to bridge the gap between the statutory minimum wage and the lowest wages under collective agreements;
- non-application of indexing of statutory minimum wage and allowances on 1.1.1995.

I

P

In January 1996, the Government and the social partners signed a short-term social consultation agreement which adopted in particular the following wage-policy principles for 1996:
- As a rule, wages set under collective agreements should increase by 4.5%. This figure corresponds to a forecast inflation rate of 3.5% plus a proportion of the productivity increases in economic sectors or companies.
- Wage negotiations shall take into account productivity increases and the economic and financial situation of the economic sector or company.
- If, during the year, the inflation rate deviates by more than 0.2%, the reference average of 4.5% will be adjusted accordingly for subsequent negotiations.
- The national minimum wage has been increased by 5% (7.2% for those in domestic service).
- Legislation will be adopted to give all workers an entitlement to a Christmas bonus, applicable in those cases where such a bonus is not included in a collective agreement.

IRL

Wage trends
Very limited increases under the Programme for Competitiveness and Work: 8% in total over the three years 1994-1996.

S

See 2.2.2.0

L

Wage restraint
In accordance with the tripartite agreement of 8.3.94, the unions will take account of the need for a policy based on wage restraint in companies in difficulty. Employers will take account of the need to maintain and even create employment.

UK

The Government announced on 17 September 1996 that the present approach to public sector pay will continue. As in the previous 3 years, all pay and price increases should be offset, or more than offset, by efficiencies and other economies so that they do not add to public spending. The Government also remains committed to more delegated and performance related pay arrangements throughout the public sector in line with the Citizen's Charter principles. For example, local pay determination has been established in the National Health Service and pay and grading has been delegated to all individual Departments and agencies in the Civil Service.

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Framework measures

General measures designed to develop new employment areas, mainly in services, may be divided into two categories. First, measures to integrate or provide jobs for the unemployed, which are often implemented through intermediary organisations (integration enterprises, non-profit associations etc.). Such initiatives are found in practically all EU Member States and focus on certain themes (assistance, childcare, environment). Secondly, measures where the objective is more to develop new markets. Such measures are still rare, tending to be part of an approach designed to cut wage costs, owing to the negligible productivity increases associated with these activities.

A

SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS
These projects provide less favoured persons with specific needs (former addicts, ex-prisoners, the homeless, etc.), with transitional employment, for a specific length of time, in the joinery trade, catering, a restoration project, tidying-up operation, etc. They operate in the same way as a company, making a profit by selling goods or services. Subsidies from the Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) make up the losses due to the lower productivity of the persons employed or the higher costs involved.

PROMOTION OF INVESTMENT AND RESTRUCTURING MEASURES
see 4.2.1

B

See chapter 5 for measures to help disadvantaged groups.

VOLUNTARY WORK BY THE UNEMPLOYED
Unemployed persons may perform voluntary work for non-profit organisations without losing their unemployment benefit.
MUNICIPAL RECRUITMENT PLAN (Wallonian region)
To enable local authorities to recruit long-term unemployed young people for a maximum period of three years. Funding is provided by the Wallonian regional authorities and the energy distribution companies (gas and electricity). Objective: 1500 jobs.
SOCIAL WORKSHOPS (Flemish region)
Unemployed persons who cannot be integrated into the open labour market are employed in social workshops, which are being subsidised on an experimental basis by the Flemish government.

D

JOB CREATION SCHEMES (ABM)
Workers on job creation schemes are obliged to accept a normal job even it is only for a specified period. Previously they were obliged to accept paid employment only if it was on an open-ended contract. This change emphasises the priority now given to non-subsidised employment over job-creation schemes.

Productive work promotion in the context of environment, social services and youth aid is limited to the end of 1997.

DK

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS
Designed to boost employment prospects for young people and other special risk groups through projects which would not otherwise have been implemented by local authorities or private organisations. Financing is from a central fund.

LOCAL ACTIVITY GENERATION ACT
See point 5.1.1

E

F

At local level, the State and the local authorities provide financial support for institutions running social and occupational reintegration schemes for long-term unemployed job-seekers. These programmes consist on the one hand of providing social support (help with accommodation, health, etc.), and on the other hand of providing work experience in jobs of benefit to the community ("solidarity" employment contracts) or in economic integration undertakings and intermediary associations.

FIN

Organisations working with the unemployed receive financial support, a cooperation between the authorities and these organisations are being developed.

Team work and orientated training are being further developed in the framework of the orientation and information given to the long-term unemployed.

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69

Framework measures

GR

Subsidy to hotel businesses for the maintenance of their personnel even in the winter months;
Subsidy to industries and handicrafts located in fornlier regions;
Subdidies to mining industries, stockfarms, and enterprises located in special departments of the country;
Programme of support for unemployed women providing training in areas such as childcare, knitting workshops, tourism, restoration work etc.

NL

By 1998, 40 000 public jobs are to be created for the long-term unemployed in the welfare, security and childcare sectors; pay starts at the statutory minimum wage and may rise to 20% above it. The cost up to 1998 will be HFL 1.8 billion.

Experiments with allocating resources to innovative projects aimed at developing employment for the long-term unemployed

I

Social co-operatives
Laws Nos 381/91 (8.11.91) and 266/91 on voluntary organisations.
Law No 236/93: Fund for the employment of young people in cultural activities, tourism and social services in the Mezzogiorno.
Law No 451/94 and Decree-law No 300/96 on socially useful jobs. Rules on small cooperatives (Article 11 of Decree-law No 301/96). Special measures for promoting self-employment in the Mezzogiorno regions (Article 7 of Decree-law No 301/96).
Framework Law on social services.

P

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES PROGRAMME (IDL)
the objective of which is to create jobs, encourage people to remain in areas subject to exodus, and develop craft trades.
There are basic-education programmes for adults organised on a municipal basis in cooperation with local authorities with the aim of establishing an integrated approach to the problems of local development.

IRL

The government's Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development recognises the importance of a local dimension in business and job creation and of boosting resources to allow local communities to contribute to the fight against unemployment and the promotion of local development.

S

L

In 1984 a scheme was introduced to assist in the creation of jobs of 'socio-economic' use. This scheme which was very successful will be part (along with other active measures) of an information and publicity campaign and is aimed at the recruitment of persons threatened with loss of their job.

The temporary assistance division (DAT - Division d'auxilliaires temporaires) was set up to create temporary jobs in the framework of activities and services of a general nature, while responding to actual needs. Recruitment takes place among young jobseekers (less than 30 years) who are entitled to the minimum wage. The employment funds reimburses employers the social contributions and 25% of the wage (except of the state is the employer).

UK

ELIMINATION OF BARRIERS TO JOB CREATION
The government has made the removal of unnecessary regulations a priority, in order to encourage job creation, and its deregulation initiative is part of this policy. It has consulted businesses and re-examined all the regulations and is in the process of repealing or amending more than 1000 regulations. All new proposals for regulations must be accompanied by an assessment of their probable impact on businesses.

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Local and household services

Aid designed to encourage job creation in everyday services is granted in several countries (e.g. B, F, D, FIN). Apart from framework measures (see 2.3.1) it consists of tax concessions and reductions in contributions, sometimes linked with new instruments such as service vouchers or, in Germany, with entitlement to a kindergarten place. In all cases State aid is designed to reestablish a balance between trends in wage costs and productivity without affecting net wages, above all in order to improve the ability to finance demand. One benefit of these policies is their limited windfall or substitution effects.

DK

INITIATIVE ON PRIVATE DOMESTIC SERVICES
Since 1.1.94, aid of DKr 65 per hour is given to householders declaring work done at their home (e.g. washing, cleaning, gardening). The scheme will run for three years.

A

Special provisions, as part of "Insertion subsidy" (gemeinnützige Eingliederungsbeihilfe), for job creation in childcare establishments which help working women (or parents) by staying open longer. The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) supports the creation of new permanent jobs in this sector by covering 50% of wage costs during the first three years.

E

B

1. PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE NON-MARKET SECTOR
2. EMPLOYMENT OF DOMESTIC STAFF
3. FAMILY HELP NOT SUBJECT TO SOCIAL SECURITY
4. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (Royal Decree of 10.5.94)
5. SERVICE VOUCHER

F

DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE VOUCHER
A tax reduction is granted to private individuals who employ domestic staff (50% of agreed expenditure with a limit of 90 000 FF per household). Result: 25 000 full-time-equivalent jobs created each year.

Since the adoption of the Law of 29 January 1996 for the development of jobs providing a service to individuals, the service voucher scheme, which was set up in 1994 and which simplified administrative procedures, has been made permanent. Additionally, works councils are able to help employees finance domestic employment.

ALLOWANCE FOR CHILDCARE AT HOME
Paid to households employing a person for childcare at home.

D

CHILDCARE
From 1.1.96, introduction of the right to a kindergarten place.

FIN

As of the beginning of 1994, anyone who employs a person for household maintenance, cleaning, odd jobs, etc. is exempted from paying tax and social security contributions on wages up to FIM 5 000 per year.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Local and household services

GR

NL

I

P

Following this programme, experimental application of a series of measures to promote the development of local services, encourage very small businesses and control the population exodus from certain under-populated regions.

IRL

1991 Childcare Act: on the organisation of childcare.

S

L

UK

The 1990 Care in the Community Act, which entered into force in 1993, makes local authorities responsible for organising care for the elderly, the mentally and physically disabled and people with learning difficulties, more or less on the basis of market economy rules.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Social and environmental services

Job creation in other services too is sometimes boosted by aid and organised within intermediate structures. The primary concerns are conservation of the cultural heritage and environmental protection and sanitation. Measures are either directly linked to employment (subsidies, reduced contributions, etc.) or are indirect, e.g. regulations or taxation relating to dumping or recycling etc.

DK

IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT
Programme launched in 1990. Subsidies amounting to 50% of wage costs payable by private householders or flatowners for repair work. Effect: approx. 5 000 jobs created. DKr 1 billion in public funds per year.
WASTE AND RECYCLING
Adoption in 1993 of an Order on waste disposal and recycling. Subsidies are available for projects, and a tax on waste has been introduced.

A

The insertion subsidy (gemeinnützige Eingliederungsbeihilfe)encourages job creation in socially useful sectors such as social services, urban and rural regeneration, culture, environmental tourism, etc. As well as individual jobs, it also promotes projects, in which case funding may be used to fill key posts and finance material costs.
The insertion subsidy procedures (subsidies amounting up to 66.7% of wage costs for a period of up to 36 months) also apply to the creation of new, permanent jobs in waste management and environmental consultancy (environmental protection and sanitation, waste recycling and storage).

E

SCHOOLS - WORKSHOPS
Programme offering sandwich training for unemployed young people. Both theoretical training and work experience relate to the safeguarding of the cultural heritage.

B

In order to meet certain needs concerning crime prevention and security in communes and large towns, local coordinators and prevention and security assistants will be introduced as provided for in the basic rules governing local employment agencies.
Some 29 contracted local coordinators will be taken on; the costs involved will be borne by the federal authorities. The communes and towns concerned will be able to use the local employment agency to recruit the prevention and security assistants.

F

D

FIN

Financial support is given to organisations for the unemployed. Cooperation between the authorities and these organisations will be strengthened.

Teamwork and training in guidance activities will be developed as part of guidance and information services for the long-term unemployed.

An increasing amount of attention is being devoted to environmental questions in relation to all activities in society and in companies, with development of the necessary know-how and technology.

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Social and environmental services

GR

NL

I

Residential buildings programme (renovation)

1994-95 environmental programme implementing the law on environmental issues.

Law n° 451/94 introduces certain new provisions on work in the public interest in innovatory fields such as cultural heritage, protection of the environment, urban regeneration, and support for SMEs in the services sector, commerce and services for individuals. The law emphasises the exceptional nature of such work, which must be of limited duration. The objective is recruitment of the unemployed.

Workers thus recruited have certain advantages. Recruitment in this way is not the same as recruitment on an employment contract and does not entail discontinuation of benefits from the Special Payments Fund, loss of the mobility allowance or deletion from placement or mobility lists.
Article 4 of Decree-law No 300/96 allows projects on socially useful jobs to be submitted by the Ministry of the Environment, regions and municipalities.

P

Employment programme for persons receiving unemployment benefit, the aim being to provide temporary employment on projects of benefit to the community organised by non-profit associations. Supplementary allowance of up to 20% of unemployment benefit.

Environment
- System of incentives for young entrepreneurs (SIJE) (Portaria n° 606-A of 28.6.93 and Portaria n° 1241 of 6.12.93).
Support for projects concerned with the creation and modernisation of businesses by young entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 35. Aid for projects aiming to safeguard the environment is increased by 30%.

IRL

The Community Employment programme (CE) which offers 40 000 part-time jobs for the unemployed, covers a very wide range of social and public services, including health, education, community social measures, public information and housing.

The Training and Employment Authority (FAS) makes a major contribution to creating jobs linked to the environment and national heritage, thus encouraging and supporting the development of tourism. It both assists the material development of measures and helps improve local authorities' ability to create and manage similar arrangements under the local enterprise programme.

S

In 1995 a special allowance is being granted for certain building refurbishment operations.
To encourage tourism, VAT in this sector has been cut from 25% to 21%.

L

UK

RENOVATION
The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) provides more than £1.3 billion per year for urban and rural regeneration. Local partnerships which have already succeeded under the Challenge Fund and parts of the City Challenge budget will receive more than £2 billion between 1992 and 2002, and a second series of Challenge Fund tenders has been launched in 1995. Partnerships design their own programmes to respond to specific local needs, for example in employment, education and training.

ENTERPRISE ZONES
Partnerships help promote job creation and investment by clearing and using waste land and vacant sites. Five enterprise zones are attempting to stimulate private-sector investment in the target zones by offering tax concessions and exemption from business rates for 10 years. Three more zones are planned in regions particularly affected by the closure of coal mines.

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Recent measures

DK

New early retirement programme from 1.1.95: workers aged between 60 and 65 receive a part-time early retirement benefit if their working time is cut by one quarter, as long as it is not less than 12 hours a week.
The growing use of short-duration employment contracts made necessary by the recruitment of replacements for workers on special leave has boosted the external flexibility of the labour market.

A

The social partners are currently negotiating about new working patterns aimed at increasing job security. The interests of employees are to be taken into account, and it is also intended to increase the attractiveness of Austria as a site for economic activity. More jobs rather than overtime, income should be increasingly given up in exchange for more leisure time, working hours should be made more flexible (through the use of annual working-time models, especially in the construction industry and tourism). Employee-friendly flexibility should be promoted, as should measures to increase the compatibility of working and family life (working-time "current accounts" (Zeitkontomodelle), flexitime, flexible pension arrangements, part-time work, etc.).
The law on structural adaptation will make access to early retirement more difficult from 1.1.96. Any paid employment taken up before retirement proper will have negative effects on retirement pension. Measures will also be taken to discourage early retirement and bring de facto retirement age closer into line with statutory retirement age.

E

Since the adoption of labour market reform legislation in May 1994, several measures have been introduced with a view to implementing or regulating the reform, the aim of which is to make the organisation of work and working time more flexible and boost the role of collective agreements in establishing conditions of employment and rates of pay.
Collective agreements already signed and due to take effect in 1996 indicate a continuation of the policy of wage restraint pursued in 1995 (average annual rise: 3.8%).

B

A number of cases of labour market inflexibility are in the process of being corrected. It is now possible to conclude successive fixed-term contracts (max. 4). The rules on temporary work in SMEs (less than 50 employees) have been relaxed, and working time has been annualised. The law of 10.4.95 on work redistribution in the public sector establishes the rights to take partial retirement and work reduced hours.

While maintaining indexing and incremental rises, wages have been frozen in real terms for the period 1995/96. (See 2.2.3)

The multi-sectoral agreement of December 1994 makes provision for sectoral employment agreements based on arrangements which best suit companies' characteristics and needs. Net job creation gives rise to a reduction in employers' contributions. (See 2.1.2.3)

F

A large number of instruments giving more flexibility have been introduced in recent years in order to help companies adapt to fluctuations in activity: new forms of annualisation of working time with or without a reduction in working hours (as agreed), and new ways of limiting redundancies (partial unemployment, gradual early retirement).
Major efforts have been made to promote employment in services, with the introduction of the service voucher and measures agreed between the State and companies to assist the development of new service vocations.
In addition, the policy of reducing labour costs on low wages has been stepped up. It consists of a reform in social welfare funding (partial state-financing of family allowances) and a reduction in contributions on low wages.

D

The objective of the initiative on part-time employment ("Teilzeitoffensive") is to encourage voluntary acceptance of part-time employment, with the social partners' support. Protection for part-time workers who become unemployed has been improved.
The law on working time (1.7.94) reduces the limitations on working time. Sunday working remains banned, with a number of exceptions.
As of 1.1.1995 productive work promotion measures have been extended to the new Länder, covering the fields of the environment, social services and childcare. AFG-Reform.

FIN

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Recent measures

GR

Several measures have been introduced recently in a bid to improve flexibility, including a law approved by both employers and trade unions extending the scope for part-time employment, measures allowing statutory working time to be cut by 50%, and the possibility of continuous work in four shifts.

NL

- wage costs: The statutory minimum wage and allowances will not be indexed Redundancy: it is intended to shorten the obligatory authorisation procedure.

Projects to reduce wage costs for firms supplying local services are planned for 1996.

I

Under the agreement of July 1993 greater flexibility is being planned or is at the stage of advanced discussion with the social partners (introduction of temporary employment contracts, part-time employment contracts, work sharing, etc.). Encouragement of local initiatives: law on work in the public interest (Law 451/94 and Decree-law No 300/96), establishing of the Employment Fund and the Fund for the Development of Areas Eligible for Community Fund Support. Law No 451/94 makes provision for temporary measures for the management of surplus workers (Article 3), experimental measures relating to employment (Article 6) and working time flexibility with regard to maintaining or boosting employment levels (Article 7). Provision is made for incentives for companies to recruit unemployed white-collar workers on fixed-term contracts (Article 9 of Decree-law No 301/96). The regional employment agencies may enter into agreements with the most representative white-collar organisations with a view to placing unemployed white-collar workers (Article 9 of Decree-law No 301/96).
Law No 304/95 (Article 1) and Law No 341/95 (Article 8) contain rules on territorial agreements.

P

System of incentives for Small Business: "To strengthen the competitiveness of business in order to guarantee their viability in the wider market and to stand up to the challenges of developing technology" (D.L n° 291/95 of 14/11).

IRL

A "Unit for Partnership in Enterprise" (UPE) was set up to help the social partners implement new flexible forms of work organisation at company level. The UPE is above all concerned with the information, consultation and participation of workers in the process of adaptation and organisation of work.

S

A special committee has been set up to look at the consequences of alternative possibilities for reducing working time and introducing flexible rules. One of its jobs will be to identify the long-term implications of reducing working hours and look at how flexible rules could be incorporated into Swedish legislation. A committee on labour law has been set up to identify inter alias solutions appropriate to SMEs.

Subsidies for investment in school and assistance centre buildings have been allocated.

L

Changing of working patterns and in particular the extension of reference periods through collective agreements. Widening of the scope for part-time employment in the public sector.
Job creation measures: aids for the creation of socio-economically beneficial jobs; business start-up aids.
Introduction of a progressive early retirement scheme through the law of 31/7/95 which will be financed through the employment Fund if an unemployed person is taken on in substitution.
A tripartite working group (created in the framework of job creation initiatives) will examine the possible effects on employment and working conditions of the development in teleworking and working from home.

UK

Legal coverage of external flexibility conditions and the length of working time is very limited, as these matters are normally settled in contracts.
The government is encouraging the decentralisation of pay agreements and the development of flexible pay systems tailored to local productivity and labour market conditions. A similar approach has been adopted with regard to the public sector (September 1994).
In order to promote new jobs, a deregulation initiative continues to remove administrative obstacles to job creation by companies.

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Retirement and early retirement

A

1 RETIREMENT AND EARLY RETIREMENT

Statutory retirement age: men: 65; women: 60.

Early retirement: 60 for men (57 for those with reduced working capacity) and 55 for women.

Amount: up to 80% of earnings.

Eligibility:

Early retirement for the unemployed after 240 months' membership of the scheme within the last 360 calendar months prior to the key date, or 240 months' contributions to compulsory insurance (irrespective of the time-frame). A further condition of eligibility is 180 months' contributions to compulsory insurance (regardless of when these were paid) and receipt of unemployment benefit for 52 weeks during the 15 months prior to the key date.

Early retirement after a long period of insurance after 240 months' membership of the scheme within the last 360 calendar months prior to the key date, or 240 months' contributions (irrespective of the time-frame). A further condition of eligibility is 450 months' membership of the scheme or 420 months' contributions to compulsory insurance.

Early retirement for people with reduced working capacity after 180 months' contributions to compulsory insurance within the last 360 calendar months prior to the key date, or 240 months' contributions to compulsory insurance (irrespective of the time-frame).

FIN

1 RETIREMENT AND EARLY RETIREMENT

Statutory retirement age: 65 years in both the residence based National Pension Scheme and earnings related Employment Pension Scheme.

Amount: maximum of 60 % of earnings in Employment Pension Scheme. The amount of the national pension depends on a person's other pension income, period of residence in Finland and his/her family status.

Early retirement pension: may be awarded to persons between 60 and 64 years within both schemes, the amount of which is permanently reduced. Retirement may also be deferred beyond the normal age of retirement, in which case the amount of the pension is increased.

Persons under the age of 65 who are unable to work because of illness, defect or injury are entitled to invalidity pension or rehabilitation benefit within both schemes. An individual early retirement pension may be granted to a person aged between 58 and 64 who has been gainfully employed for a long time. (The minimum age limit is 55 for those born before 1940). An unemployment pension is paid within both schemes to an unemployed person over the age of 60 who has been unemployed for a long time and has earned employment pension for a minimum of 5 years within the preceding 15 years.

Retirement and early retirement

I

1 PENSION REFORM, RETIREMENT, AND EARLY RETIREMENT

Law No 335 of 8 August 1995 on reform of the pension system makes provision for the gradual abolition of retirement pension, the adoption of a new method of calculating payments (contributory), a mechanism linking age and contribution periods, incentives for persons who continue to work, approximation of the various management systems, and the reintroduction of pension funds.

Statutory age: 62 for men, 57 for women, to be increased in stages to 65 for men and 60 for women by 2000.

Minimum contribution period: 17 years (1996).
Cumulation with earnings: subject to certain conditions

For workers with more than 18 years' contributions at 31.12.1995, payments will be calculated on an earnings-related basis; for workers with fewer than 18 years' contributions at 13.12.95, payments will be earnings-related for previous years and contributions-related as from 1.1.96

Early retirement: workers in companies in an economic crisis may apply for early retirement five years before the statutory age (10 years in the steel industry). Few sectors currently offer early retirement (Alitalia, iron industry, steel industry).

Leave for family reasons or for education

DK

1 PARENTAL, SABBATICAL AND STUDY LEAVE

10 weeks per family, paid in the same way as maternity benefit. Each parent is also entitled to six months' leave, plus a second six-month period if the employer agrees. This individual leave entitlement cannot be transferred between the two parents. A flat-rate allowance equivalent to 70% of unemployment benefit is paid, which may be supplemented by the local authorities at their discretion. This leave, introduced in July 1992, is also available to workers for training or any other purposes (e.g. sabbatical leave). The allowance for training leave is the same as unemployment benefit.

For sabbatical leave it is 70% of unemployment benefit. Workers' jobs are not guaranteed in either case, unlike the jobs of workers taking parental leave. The minimum duration of sabbatical leave is 13 weeks, the maximum one year; it may be part of a work-sharing arrangement under which workers on leave are replaced by long-term unemployed persons (minimum 12 months' unemployment). These types of leave are financed by contributions paid by employed workers (later by employers) to the three labour market funds established in autumn 1993. The allowance in connection with parental leave and sabbatical leave will be reduced to 60 per cent as per 1 April 1997.

The sabbatical leave scheme will expire as from 1999, while the two other leave schemes have been made permanent. Sabbatical leave must now be taken for a minimum period of 13 weeks.

Statutory child-care leave is 13 or 26 weeks, according to the age of the child (26 weeks if the child is under one year old and 13 weeks if the child is older). Agreement may also be reached on leave of up to a total of one year.

FIN

1 PARENTAL LEAVE

An employee is entitled to maternity, paternity or parental leave, as well as leave for family reasons. Maternity benefit is paid for 105 days. It is then followed by parental benefit, which is paid for the following 158 days to the mother or the father. A father may take 6-12 days' paternity leave after the birth of his child. A father is entitled to the paternity benefit for 6-12 days provided that he takes care of the child and is not employed at that time. Leave for family reasons is to look after a child under the age of 3 years. The minimum duration is two months.

2 STUDY LEAVE

A full-time employee is entitled to study leave, during which he or she is not paid but may receive a training grant. Study leave may not exceed two years during a 5-year period working for the employer. Under the Study Leave Act (Laki opintovapaasta 273/79), an employee who has been employed full-time by the same employer for one year in one or several periods is entitled to study leave. The employee has no right to pay during the leave. Study leave may not exceed two years during a five year period of work for the same employer.

Local and household services

B

1 PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE NON-MARKET SECTOR

There are still a quite number of needs in the non-market sector which have not yet been met. In tackling these needs, new jobs will be created. Complete exemption from employer contributions will enable the cost of these new jobs to be reduced. To this end, agreements will be concluded with the sectors concerned; in the initial phase, consultation will be restricted to hospitals, rest homes and nursing homes, home nursing care and rehabilitation centres.

2 EMPLOYMENT OF DOMESTIC STAFF

Exemption from employer' contributions when a person who has been receiving full-time unemployment benefit for at least 6 months is recruited for domestic duties.

3 FAMILY HELP NOT SUBJECT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

For work not exceeding four hours a day.

4 LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY (Royal Decree of 10.5.94)

The Decree makes provision for the automatic registration of the long-term unemployed with a Local Employment Agency, which helps them find jobs (maximum 45 hours a month) working for private individuals, associations, local authorities or in agriculture/market gardening. The parties offering work benefit from a 30-40% tax reduction depending on income.

5 SERVICE VOUCHER

A study is under way on the possibilities for using services vouchers giving entitlement to tax concessions and reduced contributions in order to encourage the development of local services.

3. REDUCTION OF NON-WAGE LABOUR COSTS

3.1 Reductions of statutory contributions to lower labour costs

3.1.1 General reductions to lower labour costs
3.1.2 Targeted reductions to lower labour costs

3.2 Reduction of statutory contributions to encourage recruitment

3.2.1 General reductions to encourage recruitment
3.2.2 Targeted reductions to encourage recruitment

3.X Recent Measures

General reductions to lower labour costs

8 countries have reduced various tax rates, and several have extended the taxation base.
5 countries have reduced employers' contributions, while just one has introduced a structural reduction of employees' contributions.
3 countries (D, S, NL) prefer restricting social security expenditure to reducing contributions.

DK

Reduction in income tax financed by taxes on consumption, linked to environmental protection.
New pay-related labour market contribution: from 5% in 1994 to 8.6% in 1998.
Changing the tax system : introducing green taxes on business and recycling tax revenue to the enterprises in the period of 1996-2000. The main elements of the recycling are : reductions in employers' labour market contributions, subsidies for energy-saving investments and assistance to SMEs.

A

E

Reduction in employers' and employees' social contributions (0.8 percentage points for employers, 0.2 percentage points for employees) offset by a 1% increase in VAT.
The income tax base was extended in 1994 to include unemployment benefit and certain invalidity pensions.

B

Several taxation measures were adopted in 1993 to reduce the budget deficit, including a slight increase in social security contributions, a cut in tax allowances on personal income and introduction of an austerity surtax.

Targeted reductions have been made to employers' social security contributions (see 3.1.2.0).

F

The policy of labour cost reduction in France is one of the key strands of France's economic and employment policy. So far, it has taken the form of a reduction in the sickness insurance contributions payable by employers in respect of low wages.

D

Germany has adopted a certain number of measures to finance unification costs, such as an increase in social security contributions and a temporary solidarity surtax (7.5%) on personal income tax and corporation tax. It will be reduced to 5.5% in 1998.

FIN

Reduction in the rate of taxation, which varies between 50% and 25%, offset by extending the taxation base. Employment tax, introduced in 1992, has been cut from 2% to 0,75%.

Employers' and emploees' unemployment insurance contribution will be cut in average by 1,5% which is part of a large programme to reduce employment by 50 %.

Employers' contributions have not been increased in line with raising unemployment. There has been an increasing share of state financing and cuts in social and other public expenditure.

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General reductions to lower labour costs

GR

5% reduction in taxation at source of wages and assimilated income

NL

Reduction of labour costs amounting to 1.4% of GDP focusing on low wage earners:
- reduction of employers' health insurance contributions
- wage restraint
- income tax reductions, principally for low wage earners

I

The social security and pension reforms approved in 1995 contains provisions which affect the tax treatment of social security contribution : with respect to contributions to pension funds the bill provides that up to 6% of the annual gross remuneration of employees can be set aside in the fund for tax purposes : 2% may be deducted from the employees' taxable income, 2% from the employer's taxable income and 2% from the share of the annual provision for the "trattamento di fine rapporto" (the "statutory termination indemnity" is a lump sum paid to employee by employer when the contract of work expires)

P

Reduction of 1% in employer contributions in the budget with effect from 1995. In order to finance this reduction VAT has been increased by 1%.
Social security contribution in respect of members of corporate boards has been reduced from 32% to 31% (the employer's share is 21.25% and the employee's 10%).

IRL

Several measures have been introduced to reduce charges on work income: introduction of new social security contributions relief for employees; abolition of health and training contributions for low earners; abolition of 1% levy on high incomes; increases in personal allowances, standard tax band, and exemption limits.

S

L

From 1/7/94 structural reduction of employers' social security contributions (1.70%), financed by increasing the "solidarity tax" on companies from 1% to 4% and a "social contribution" (additional excise) on energy consumption. Value: 0.5% of GDP.

UK

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Targeted reductions to lower labour costs

Six countries have reduced taxes payable by certain groups (low earners, disabled, young), three have cut taxes on SMEs, and two (F, B) also grant concessions to sectors exposed to competition.
Regional taxation variations exist in two countries (D, GR).
Five countries have also cut employers' contributions on low wages.

DK

A

Cut in tax rate for highest income brackets from 62% to 50% (1989 tax reform).

B

MARIBEL PROGRAMME
The Maribel programme makes provision for a cut in employers' contributions, focusing on lower wages and certain sectors more exposed to international competition (the programme is currently being reviewed).
From 1.1.1994, deductible amounts have been increased.
Sectors exposed to international competition: basic amount BFR 8437 per quarter per manual worker - BFR 9300 for the first five workers in firms with fewer than 20 workers on average. Other sectors covered by Maribel: basic amount BFR 1875 per quarter per manual worker - BFR 3000 for the first five workers in firms with fewer than 20 workers on average. Maribel has been financed by an increase in the tax on petrol.

GLOBAL PLAN - as of 1.4.95 employers pay only 50% of the contributions for employees earning less than BFR 41 860 per month and decreasing contributions (50% - 10%) for those earning between BFR 41 860 and 51 775 - Exemption from contributions for part-time work.

D

Workers with regular weekly working hours of less than 15 hours and earning no more than DM 590 (old Länder) or DM 500 (new Länder) are exempted from social security contributions.

E

The 1995 Programmes for recruitment on fixed-term contracts, within the framework of the promotion of employment, provides for a reduction of 75% in the employer social security contributions when taking on those unemployed who are disabled or over 45 years (100% if it is the first recruitment in the enterprise since January 1995). A reduction of 50% in the employer social security contributions is allowed for enterprises employing less than 25 people, which take on workers aged over 45 years or the long-term unemployed (75% if it is the first recruitment in the enterprise since January 1995).

F

The Law of 20 December 1993 introduced a progressive reduction until 1998 in the family allowance contributions payable by employers in respect of wages between 1 and 1.6 times the statutory minimum wage (SMIC).
In 1996, the five-year programme to reduce these contributions was stepped up, being extended to cover part of the employer's sickness insurance contributions and to embrace more employees (those earning up to 1.33 times the statutory minimum wage).
This latest policy takes the form of a contribution refund of FF 800 per month for a SMIC wage and on a sliding scale to 1.2 times the minimum wage (SMIC). In October 1996 the two measures were brought together.

FIN

The premium for unemployment insurance was reduced. The employer premium for unemployment insurance is graded to payroll size to reduce overall labour costs for SME companies.

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Targeted reductions to lower labour costs

GR Reduction in income tax rates for workers in certain regions.

NL Restructuring of income tax
- reduction for low wages
- structural reduction in SME employers' contributions
- increase in the tax allowance for the self-employed
- reduction in the rate for the first tax bracket

I Reduction in employers' contributions for part-time work.

P Reductions or temporary exemptions from employers' social security contributions in cases of net job creation (D.L. n° 89/95 of 6/5/95 - Article 17) (D.L. n° 34/96 of 18.4.96 - Article 7).

IRL Reduction in employers' contributions on low incomes from 12.2% to 9% (less than Irl £12.000), partly financed by raising the ceiling on employees' contributions.

S Trainee temporary replacement scheme allow employers to raise the skill levels of employees. If an employer allows an employee to participate in an education program during working hours, the employer is entitled to a deduction from employer payroll taxes (up to 400 SKr per day and substitute) for the wage costs for substitutes who are employed on a full-time basis. This is on the condition that the employee participating in the education program retains his/her employment benefits and that the substitute receives wages in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. The scheme can also be used by companies which have difficulty in providing work for employees so that the company may avoid temporary lay-offs or permanent redundancies.

L

UK Reduction in employers' national insurance contributions for low earners (20% of active population).

From April 1994, 1 percentage point cut in the three lowest rates. 0.2 percentage point cut in the main contributions rate.

Further cut of 0.6 percentage point for lower rates from April 1995. Value 1995-1996: 0.13 % of GDP.

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General reductions to encourage recruitment

General reductions only in four countries; in three of them the aim is to encourage recruitment by reducing working time. Italy also grants reductions for job creation in certain sectors.

DK

Increased flexibility in labour market schemes, including job training, leave-of-absence and further training in order to upgrade the skills of the labour force through individual planning.
Wage support to long term unemployed conditional of net extra employment.

A

E

B

Cut in employers' contributions where working times are reorganised so that additional workers are recruited (BFR 37 500 per quarter) (See 2.1.2.3).

Global plan "Plus un"
Larger cut in employers' social contributions on recruitment of a first worker who was on unemployment benefit (100% without ceiling, then decreasing to 50% over three years).

F

Reductions in employers' contributions in order to encourage recruitment concern:
- the recruitment of the first employee,
- contracts aimed at the vocational integration of young persons (contrat d'apprentissage/apprenticeship contract) and the long-term unemployed (contrat initiative emploi/employment initiative contract),
- companies which reduce their employees' working time either by a reduction of at least 10% in collective working time or by the development of part-time working.

D

FIN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

General reductions to encourage recruitment

GR

Reduction in employer's contributions on recruitment of unemployed persons for a certain length of time.

NL

I

Companies in sectors hit by a serious employment crisis which implement plans for the creation of jobs may be partially or completely exempted from payment of employers' social contributions for newly recruited workers.
Job creation plans must be drawn up by the trade-union and employers' organisations in the relevant sector and must be approved by the Ministry of Labour.

Reduction in employers' contributions for part-time work.

P

IRL

Employers are exempted from their share of social security (12%) where an unemployed person(s) are employed. Number of employees since April 1995 is 5 800.

S

L

UK

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Targeted reductions to encourage recruitment

The target groups for reductions are young people, low earners, the disabled and the elderly, and in one country (F) domestic workers and the long-term unemployed. Employers who recruit such persons benefit from reductions which vary between 100 % and 50 %, for 1-3 years.

DK

A

E

Social security contributions reduced for apprenticeship contracts (1996 by 3,883 ptas for the employer and 622 ptas for the apprentice).
Grants of 500,000 ptas when permanent contracts are given to the disabled, those more than 45 years or to woemn underrepresented or who are reentering the labour market, and of 400,000 ptas for permanent youth contracts.

Reduction of 50% in employer social security contributions for workers over 45 years taken recruited on permanent contracts.
Specific reductions in social security contributions and tax for the recruitment of disabled workers: 50% for practical training and apprenticeship contracts; 70% or 90% for permanent contracts depending on whether the worker is less or more than 45 years.
Reduction of 1,000,000 ptas in the business tax base for each worker over 45 years or disabled worker recruited on a permanent contract who is counted as an additional man/year to the total personnel compared to the previous year.

B

Recruitment benefit plan
Employers who recruit young people under the age of 26 who have been unemployed for six months benefit from a decreasing reduction in their social security contributions (100/75/50%) for three years. Where unemployment has been for more than nine months, employers are also exempted from paying the personal social security contribution (13.07%) for one year.

Reduction in employers' social security contributions for recruitment of long-term unemployed persons (from 1/1/95).

Reduced tax rate for unemployed persons who work less than 45 hours a month in personal services, protection of the environment, leisure services and security services.

F

Ccontrat initiative emploi/employment initiative contract for people in difficulties, especially the long-term unemployed, those drawing the RMI (the occupational integration minimum income), handicapped workers, the over-50s and youths in difficulties. The State aid in all cases includes an exemption from social security contributions up to the value of the SMIC.

Further a grant is of between FF 1000 and 2 000 is given to the unemployed in most difficulty (eg LTU for at least 24 months).

D

FIN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Targeted reductions to encourage recruitment

GR

Reduction in employers' contributions in the event of recruitment of unemployed persons

NL

Reduction of HFL 4000 on recruitment of a worker who has been unemployed for six months, and a special reduction for the provision of training.

Reduction for employers in third party allocation of income tax and social insurance for the recruitment of a long-term unemployed persons (12 months) if the period of employment is a minimum of 12 weeks with an average working week of at least 15 hours. The salary must not exceed the statutory 'criterion wage', which is the equivalent of 130% of the statutory minimum wage. In the case of the full number of working hours (32 hours), the total exemption is 4,500 guilders per year.

I

Tax credits of 25% in respect of the wage paid to the worker for firms which recruit young people (aged 19-35), unemployed persons or disabled persons on open-ended contracts (Decree No 357/94, transposed in August 1994).

P

50% reduction in employers' contributions for the recruitment of disabled workers on open-ended contracts. 3-year exemption from employers' contributions on recruiting young people (16 - 30) to their first job or long-term unemployed persons on open-ended contracts. 50% reduction in the case of a fixed-term contract.

IRL

The 1994 Social Welfare Act makes provision for an exemption of 2 years upwards from employers' social security contributions for the recruitment of any workers previously registered as unemployed for at least 13 weeks for new or additional work and for the recruitment of young persons (under 23) to their first job. Value in 1994: 0.2% of GDP.

S

Cuts in tax rates for one year for entreprise recruiting an unemployed person or a person who has been in a labour market scheme for at least 4 weeks.
This is valid for employers employing less than 500 persons.

Small enterprises who take on unemployed university graduates are entitled to a recruitment aid for a period of 12 months if there is a lack of academic experience in the enterprise.

Recruitment aid of maximum 50% gross wage subsidy is given to enterprises and official administrations/authorities which recruit certain unemployed individuals. The main objective is to increase employment, mainly for the long-term unemployed who have difficulties finding a job. The subsidy is limited to 6 months. The employment service can also offer temporary public employment to jobseekers who, in spite of active placement programmes, are unable to obtain employment and for whom training or counselling programmes are not feasible. The subsidy amounts to a maximum of 50% of the wage cost for up to 6 months.

L

RECRUITMENT AID
In the event of the recruitment of an unemployed person aged 50 or over, the Employment Fund covers the employer's contributions and contributions on wages for seven years.

Exemption from social contributions for employers and employees for the recruitment of those 2 years unemployed up to the age of 30 (3 years up to the age of 40)

Tax bonus for employers who recruit people registered unemployed for at least 3 months with the employment sevices. The reduction for employers is equivalent to 10% of the recruited persons salary.

UK

From April 1996, employers who recruit persons who have been unemployed for 2 or more years will be exempted from paying their NIC (National Insurance Contributions) for up to 12 months.

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3

Recent measures

DK

A

The government programme makes provision for the reinforcement of the environmental objectives of the tax system, reduction of the importance of work as a source of income

E

1995 budget: general reduction of social contributions by 1%, financed by increasing all VAT rates

B

- Extension of the measure reducing employers' social security contributions for the low-paid (see 3.1.2.0. "Global Plan"). The 10% band is extended to gross monthly salaries between 52.812 BFR and 60.676 BFR.
- Extension of the measure reducing employers' social security contributions where working time is reorganised (see 3.2.1.0). The reductions will apply for a period of 3 years (instead of until 31/12/97) for additional jobs created on or after 1/1/96.
- Reductions in employers' social security contributions for SMEs which recruit additional staff for scientific research.
- Reductions in employers' social security contributions for firms which replace a worker taking a career break with a new worker, and for firms recruiting an additional worker to make up for elderly workers who work part-time instead of taking early retirement.
- Reductions in employers' social security contributions for hiring workers aged over 50 unemployed for at least 6 months.

F

Law of 11 June 1996: State aid in the form of exemption from contributions for companies which reduce their employees' working hours by at least 10% in order to increase their workforce by an equivalent proportion or to avoid redundancies of an economic nature.
The amount of this reduction in contributions is between 50% and 30%. It is paid to the company for a maximum duration of seven years.

D

The government's aim is to reduced the social contributions paid equally by employee and employer from the current 41.1% of gross earnings to a quota under 40%. To contribute towards this, a law on the Programme for increased growth and employment was passed in summer 1996, as well as the planned reform of the Employment Promotion Bill. Recently various bills have been introduced to lower taxes and enhance the competitiveness of the German economy.

FIN

The general trend is to increase the connection between premiums paid and benefits received and to increase the role of the insured directly especially in earnings-related benefits. Instead minimum security is increasingly financed by general taxation. From 1996 pension fund contributions will be abolished and replaced by State financing. The pension scheme will be converted into a system providing basic security, with a minimum pension.

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Recent measures

GR Interministerial committee on improving labour market and measures for creating jobs.

NL - A tax on small-scale consumption of energy was introduced from 1/1/96, the revenue of which will be returned to taxpayers in the form of various reliefs, primarily focused on lowering the tax burden on labour (eg increase of the basic allowance, reduction in the rate for the first tax bracket).
- Various other measures became effective in 1996 : increase of the standard allowance for work-related expenses, reductions for employers of the wage tax remittance with regard to wages for employees (child nursing sector, certain educational schemes, R&D activities, the former long-term unemployed).

I

P Fiscal incentives to promote the creation of new micro and small enterprises (D.L n° 160/95 of 6/7).

IRL (1996 Finance Act) : Increases in personal allowances, standard rate band and exemption limits; reduction in employers' rates of social contributions from 12,2% to 12% and from 9% to 8,5%.

S Decreased tax on labour and increased environmental taxes (a Parliamentary Commission reported on that in June 1996 : it is proposed to reduce non-wage labour costs for SMEs by reducing employers social contributions by 5% for the first 600 000 Skr (equal to 3 employees).

L

UK New landfill tax from October 1996, the revenue from which will be used to finance a further reduction in the main rate employers' national insurance contributions (0,2 percentage points from April 1997).

Cut in basic rate of income tax from 25% to 24% from April 1996.

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4. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LABOUR MARKET POLICY

4.1 Passive measures

4.2 Active Measures

4.2.1 General financial incentives to employers
4.2.2 In-work benefits
4.2.3 Assistance for business start-up
4.2.4 Placement services
4.2.5 Guidance, information and assessment
4.2.6 Financial assistance to job seekers
4.2.7 Geographic mobility
4.2.8 Private Employment Agencies

4.X Recent measures

Annex to chapter 4

Passive measures

Member States often have a dual unemployment benefit system: an insurance scheme based on the duration of employment and previous pay (financed by contributions) and an assistance scheme based on means testing (usually financed by the national budget). With a few exceptions, today's trend is towards lower benefit levels and/or a shorter benefit period, often combined with increased obligation to seek employment.

A

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The duration of benefits depends on the length of previous employment and the person's age. Minimum duration is 20 weeks, or 30 weeks if the person has been employed for three out of the last five years. The amount depends on earnings (basis: gross wage in past calendar year, up to a specified maximum) and comes to around 60% previous net income.

Subject to certain conditions, unemployed persons whose entitlement has expired receive an allowance for an unlimited period, granted on an annual basis for as long as the person continues to meet the conditions. Older unemployed (Women from 54 and Men from 59 years) must fufil less stringent conditions.

B

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

To be entitled to unemployment benefit, a person must have worked for between 312 days in the previous 18 months and 624 days in the previous 36 months, depending on age. However, young people who have just completed their studies but have not yet found employment may draw a tideover allowance after a qualifying period. In principle, unemployment insurance benefits are open-ended; nevertheless, a "cohabiting" unemployed person aged less than 50 will lose his/her right to unemployment benefit if the duration of his/her unemployment exceeds 1.5 times the average duration for the region for the category (by sex and age) to which (s)he belongs.

Unemployment benefit (Royal Decree of 27.12.93)
Extension of the waiting period for young people after their studies. Bringing forward of the period of flat-rate benefit for an unemployed spouse (15 months instead of 18 months).
Lengthening of the period of further employment (12 months instead of 6 months) needed to be able again to claim benefit calculated on the basis of lost earnings rather than on the basis of a flat rate or decreasing sum.

D

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Benefit from the unemployment insurance scheme depends on the person's age and length of employment (from 156 days for a person under the age of 42 who has worked for 12 months to 832 days for a person aged 54 or over who has worked at least 64 months).

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

An unemployed person is subsequently entitled to unemployment assistance for an unlimited period, subject to means testing.

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DK

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

During the period 1 July 1996 to 1 January 1999 the overall benefit period is to be reduced from seven years to five years ("benefit" period of 2 years and "active" period of 3 years). During the "benefit" period, which is reduced from four to two years, unemployed persons will be entitled to reasonable leave of 12 months on request. The regional labour market boards lay down guidelines for assessing groups of unemployed persons who have a special risk of becoming long-term unemployed and who should be given offers at earlier stage. During the "active" period of three years they will be obliged/entitled to take part in an activity-generation scheme for the whole period on a full-time basis.

E

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Unemployment insurance benefits limited on the basis of contribution periods during the past six years. 70% of reference earnings during the first 180 days, and 60% thereafter. Benefits between 75% and 220% of the minimum wage. Subsequently, according to the number of dependants and incomes, unemployment assistance for a maximum of 18 months, with a possibility of extension for certain categories of unemployed. Unemployment assistance for other worker categories. Amount of assistance: 75% of the minimum wage. As of 1994, unemployment benefits are subject to personal income tax.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

The concept of dependant has been changed and is now limited to the spouse and children. Assistance is limited to unemployed persons whose incomes are less than the equivalent of 75% of the minimum wage.

F

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The payment period for the decreasing single benefit, which consists of nine bands based on the length of scheme membership and age, varies from 4 to 60 months. The benefit amount is calculated by taking a percentage of daily reference pay plus a supplement (minimum FF 131.01 per day. The full rate is reduced every 4 months, though a minimum allowance is guaranteed.
Solidarity scheme:
- Long-term unemployed: allowances granted for 6-month periods, for an unlimited time.
- Specific categories: 1 year maximum.

FIN

UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE is paid either by the Social Insurance Institution in the form of a basic daily allowance or by an unemployment fund in the form of an earnings related allowance which is calculated on the basis of confirmed monthly salary/wages for the 6 months preceding unemployment. Membership of an unemployment fund is voluntary. Unemployment allowance may be paid to persons who have been employed or self-employed for a certain period preceding unemployment.

LABOUR MARKET SUPPORT is a means-tested benefit equal to the basic unemployment allowance. An unemployed person is entitled to the labour market support if he/she has received the unemployment allowance because of not meeting the conditions related to employment.

Passive measures

GR

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Benefit limited on the basis of duration of employment, with a maximum of 12 months and a minimum of 5 months. Benefit amounts to 40% of earnings for blue-collar workers and 50% for white-collar workers (minimum of 2/3 of the minimum wage) plus 10% per dependant.

At the end of the period of entitlement there is a supplementary benefit equal to 50% of principal benefit. In addition to the existing measures, special assistance can be given to persons who have worked in the last 12 months for at least 60 days with the statutory contributions. This assistance is equal to 50% of the main benefit and is granted in for a maximum of three payments in a year.

I

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Standard benefit (30% of normal pay) is paid for a maximum of 180 days in a year to unemployed persons who have paid contributions for at least 2 years. There is also a special benefit (Law 223/91) for workers with at least 12 months' service with their employer, which is paid for 12-36 months (depending on age) and for up to 48 months in southern regions. Until the end of 1994 the amount was 40% of reference pay.
Workers in companies going through a crisis period, undergoing restructuring or affected by a temporary suspension of work may register with the Special Wage Compensation Fund (CIGS). See 4.2.4.

IRL

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Full rate unemployment benefit initially limited to 390 days (156 days if applicant is under 18).

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
Those not entitled to unemployment benefit, or those who have exhausted their entitlement to it, receive unemployment assistance, subject to means testing, for an indefinite period.

L

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Unemployment insurance benefit is limited to 12 months (plus 6 months for persons who are difficult to place). At the end of this period unemployed persons receive assistance from the income guarantee scheme for an indefinite period, subject to means testing.

ALLOWANCE FOR OLDER WORKERS / EARLY RETIREMENT
Special conditions apply to older workers in respect of unemployment insurance and early retirement.

NL

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Unemployment insurance benefit is payable for between 6 and 60 months depending on age and previous employment. Unemployed persons subsequently receive post-entitlement benefit (vervolguitkering) for 2 - 3½ years depending on age and previous employment. They may then apply to an unemployment insurance scheme for older workers (IOAW) or submit a claim under the law on general assistance (ABW) up to the age of 65.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS
There are several "work incapacity" insurance schemes for older workers, the disabled, and those who are unable to work.

P

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Duration of benefit payments depending on age. Minimum of 10 months for unemployed persons under 25. Maximum of 30 months for those aged 55 or over.
Unemployment benefit: 65% of average earnings during the 12 months preceding unemployment.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
Social assistance for unemployed persons: 70-100% of minimum wage of the sector of activity, depending on number of dependants. If social assistance for unemployed persons follows on from unemployment benefit, the duration of payments is reduced by half except for beneficiaries aged between 45 and 54, who draw the benefit for 15 months (DL 57/96 of 22/5). To qualify for social assistance, the per capita income of the household must not exceed 80% of the minimum wage. Control and anti-fraud provisions relating to unemployment benefit have been made more efficient.

S

An unemployed person who has worked for at least 80 days out of five months during a reference period of 12 months and who has been a member of an unemployment insurance fund for at least one year (self-employed 2 years) is entitled to unemployment benefit amounting to 75% of previous income, subject to a ceiling of SKr 564 per working day.

Unemployed persons not entitled to the above may receive a different type of unemployment benefit, the KAS, subject to having worked at least 75 hours a month for a least five months during a reference period of 12 months. This amounts to SKr 230 per working day. The benefit is suspended for 40 days following termination of the employment by the employee without a due cause and 60 days upon rejection of an offer for suitable work or labour market programme. Any persons who is found to have been working and in receipt of unemployment benefit has benefit suspended for 130 days.

UK

From October 1996 the Jobseeker's Allowance will come into effect - simplifying benefits for unemployed people.
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, limited to 182 days (including Sundays), is available to people who work less than 16 hours a week and who have an adequate National Insurance record in each of the two tax years preceding the claim. It is payable at a flat rate for the claimant only, and can be reduced by earnings or an occupational pension.
UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is available to people who work less than 16 hours a week, and whose income and capital are below prescribed levels. Provided the entitlement conditions remain satisfied, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is payable on an indefinite basis to those who are not entitled to contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance or whose family's needs are not met by it.
The labour market conditions of entitlement are common to both elements of Jobseeker's Allowance.

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General financial incentives to employers

This type of assistance takes the form of loans at preferential rates to encourage recruitment or recruitment grants of a general nature. A shift towards more targeted grants (e.g. for disadvantaged groups), also to avoid the "windfall effect", means that general grants are becoming less common.

DK

RECRUITMENT GRANTS
Grants given by local authorities to encourage recruitment by private companies.

A

Granting of subsidies to support:
- investment projects to secure and create jobs and
- restructuring measures designed to secure jobs

in the form of:
- interest-bearing/interest-free loans
- grants, interest subsidies and
- sureties (guarantees).

Promotion of apprenticeship and continuing training in firms. Firms which offer their workers training which is also relevant to other establishments may be granted aid of up to 50% of total cost.

E

Employment promotion programme aimed at persons receiving unemployment benefit. Details are laid down each year in the Finance Act.

B

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN (Wallonian region)
Possibility for local authorities to employ long-term unemployed young people for (maximum) a 3-year period. Funded by the Wallonian regional authorities and the energy distribution companies (Voir 2.3.1)

F

EXEMPTIONS FOR FIRST RECRUITMENTS (extension of existing measures)
Under the five-year law, recruitment grants are offered for the first, second and third employees.

D

FIN

The State, municipalities, federations of municipalities, local authorities, companies and private employers may obtain assistance for a specific period (maximum 10 months) on recruiting an unemployed person.

The Employment Decree (työllisyysasetus 130/93) and Government Resolution 196/94 state that municipalities and other local authorities, as well as companies, may be granted assistance for projects of a structural nature leading to the creation of permanent jobs, maintenance of employment levels or adaptation of companies and regions to structural change. Such assistance may take the form of investment aid.

Companies may obtain grants for projects based on local initiative and designed to help regions adapt to structural change. Grants are limited to two years and may not exceed 50% of the approved total cost.

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General financial incentives to employers

GR

Subsidy programme to employers in the private sector for the creation of new jobs by subsidising employers to keep the personnel for an additional three months.

Subsidy to employers for the recruitment for 6 months of students who have to undertake practical experience to obtain their certificate.

Subsidy to employers who employ repatriated Greeks.

NL

Financial assistance to employers is targeted in general at the long-term unemployed.

I

P

Companies which recruit long-term unemployed or young people (16 to 30 years) looking for work on open-ended contracts under this plan receive aid equivalent to 12 times the national minimum wage per net job created. (D.L. n°34/96 of 18/4/96).

- Training and employment programme.
Employers who offer training, then employ trainees on open-ended contracts, receive non-reimbursable financial aid for each job created.

- Special aid arrangements encourage recruitment of former customs workers, miners and workers in the textiles and clothing, and coal and steel sector.

IRL

The operational Programme for Industrial development (1994-1996) includes measures designed to encourage investment in indigenous industry and increase output and employment as a result.

Forbairt, a State-funded development agency, manages programmes to co-finance investment by industry in (A) improving competitiveness, (B) developing human resource capability, (C) expanding capacity. The programme also includes elements to stimulate the development of the venture capital market as it applies to small firms and to assist traditional industries to adjust to modern market conditions. The indigenous industry sector is expected to increase employment by about 2.5% in 1996.

The Community Employment programme makes provision for subsidies for temporary part-time work undertaken by public, voluntary and community bodies. Training and vocational counselling operations are also subsidised. Number of beneficiaries in 1996: 41,000.

S

In-company training programmes may be used by firms which have difficulty in finding work for their employees, allowing them to avoid temporary lay-offs or permanent redundancies. The maximum subsidy is SKr 60 per hour for a total of 920 hours.

L

UK

The Government has piloted Workstart - an employment subsidy to help very long-term unemployed people (i.e. more than 2 years) obtain jobs. Since 1993 Workstart has been tested in a number of different forms. The Government's aim is to establish whether employment subsidies have a place in the menu of opportunities for particularly long-term unemployed people and this be assessed in the light of the full evaluation which is now taking place.

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96

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In-work benefits

DK

A

Compensation for short-time working (Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe)
If the social partners or parties to a collective agreement have agreed on the introduction of short-time working (4 consecutive weeks with working time at least 20% less than normal), and in order to safeguard jobs threatened by temporary difficulties, companies receive an amount which allows them to make up part of the income losses suffered by the workers concerned. There are also special provisions to protect workers over 50.

Contribution by the Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice): payment of unemployment benefit to persons participating in activities of a Employment Promotion Foundation (Arbeitsstiftung) (contribution limited to 4 years for acquisition of a new vocational qualification).
Special feature: local and regional players and decision-makers are called upon to help support structural conversions or overcome local crises.
Similar measure: regional reintegration operation.

E

B

F

Employees having contributed to the old-age insurance scheme for at least 40 years and aged less than 60 are entitled to an allowance from the unemployment insurance scheme, payable until reaching official retirement age (this allowance is known as ARPE - allocation de remplacement pour l'emploi/employment replacement allowance).
Payment of the allowance is conditional upon the worker quitting work and a young person being recruited in his place.

D

FIN

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In-work benefits

GR

NL

I

Direct subsidies for workers in the event of shorter working hours (Law 223/91).

P

- Income compensation is paid to redundant workers from ECSC firms and textiles/clothing firms in the Vale do Ave who have found a job in which basic pay is below what they were previously earning.

IRL

BACK TO WORK ALLOWANCE enables unemployed persons to receive 75% of unemployment assistance (50% during the second year and 25% in third year) while working in certain sectors.
AREA ENTERPRISE ALLOWANCE is a similar scheme which operates in designated disadvantaged areas and allows unemployed persons to retain 100% of unemployment assistance for one year, followed by back to work allowance.
FAMILY INCOME SUPPLEMENT is payable to low income workers with families, in certain circumstances.
PART-TIME JOB INCENTIVE SCHEME provides a special income supplement to long-term unemployed people who take up a part-time job. The amount of the supplement is not affected by the wages from the part-time job.

S

L

UK

4

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Assistance for business start-up

Most countries now grant assistance for a limited period to encourage self-employment. Benefits are either capitalised or continue to be paid for a certain length of time. This period has been extended in Germany, while in France conditions of entitlement have been relaxed.

A

Initial assistance for the establishing of co-operatives and take-over of companies by the workforce.
The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) supports the establishing of undertakings with co-operative decision-making structures where jobs are created for the unemployed or persons at risk of becoming unemployed. It provides initial start-up assistance in the form of a grant or interest-free loan (after investigating economic viability and legal arrangements). It may also help workforce to take over companies which have closed down or gone into receivership.

B

Reduction of the burden of social costs on SMEs.
Proportional and flat-rate reductions.

An unemployed person who terminates his/her unemployed status in order to set up in business nevertheless retains an entitlement to unemployment benefit for a period of 9 years (previously 6 years).

D

TRANSITIONAL ALLOWANCE (Uberbruckungsgeld)
This allowance (introduced in 1986) is paid instead of unemployment benefit or income support to persons set up their own businesses. The payment is made for 26 weeks.

DK

Insured unemployed persons who wish to set up their own business as their main activity can be offered a start-up grant, after five months' unemployment in a period of eight months, if they have their business plan approved by the Danish Agency for Development of Industry and Trade. The grant is 50% of the maximum unemployment benefit and can be awarded for up to 2½ years.

E

Self-employed persons who recruit a worker over the age of 45 as their first employee are exempted from social security contributions. If the worker is younger, contributions are reduced by 75%. There also exist measures to support the promotion of self-employment, the creation and maintenance of employment in cooperatives and limited liability companies, as well as the promotion of local initiatives.

F

ASSISTANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED PERSONS STARTING UP A BUSINESS (ACCRE)
This scheme was modified by a Decree of 11 April 1996. Unemployed persons who have been registered as job-seekers for more than six months, and persons drawing the RMI (occupational integration minimum income), may claim a grant of FF 32 000 if their funding requirement is FF 256 000 or below, and FF 5 000 if their funding requirement is above FF 256 000. This grant is accompanied by exemptions from social security contributions for one year and by the provision of free advice on starting up a business.

HIVING OFF
Businesses are encouraged to grant low-interest loans to employees wishing to set up their own businesses.

FIN

A start-up grant (starttiraha / tyollisyysasetus 130/93) exists to help with the creation of permanent jobs. Demand now exceeds possible resources. A survey done showed that 69% of recipients of start-up grant would have started the business anyhow so the deadweight effect of the measure is high.

Action plans include reinforcement of preconditions for the start-up and activities of labour intensive SMEs.

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Assistance for business start-up

GR

Subsidy programme to young unemployed people who start up their own business. Financial support for the first year which is considered to be the most difficult and risky as regards the viability of the enterprise.

NL

Grants are available for persons who have received an assistance benefit who start up a new business. They receive a credit of max. Hfl 40 000 and a supplement to their income to a maximum of the level of the assistance benefit.

I

Tax concessions for new entrepreneurs (Decree 357/94) and local territorial bodies, public authorities, industrial development areas, semi-public promotional companies in the event of disposal of items from discontinued manufacturing activities (Article 4 of Decree-law No 300/96). Granting of benefits to companies under special administration in cases where a collective agreement drawn up by the Ministry of Labour allows a certain level of employment to be maintained, taking account of the characteristics of the local labour market

The Development Fund (Law 236/93) covers the financing of local re-industrialisation and initiative programmes in Objective 1 and 2 areas.

P

Business start-up by persons on unemployment benefit (CPE). Grants to enable the unemployed to create their own jobs.

Self-employment start-up assistance (ACPE).
To help young people aged between 18 and 25 and long-term unemployed adults with the vocational qualifications required for self-employment (including craft trades) to create their own jobs. 20% increase in the supplementary incentive for the long-term unemployed to cover the cost of hiring plant and equipment.

Business start-up assistance (NACE).
To encourage the creation of small businesses by private individuals over 18, associations or cooperatives.

IRL

The FAS offers a local enterprise service in conjunction with other organisations, in particular the County Enterprise Boards and local partnership associations. This service offers a full, integrated and flexible set of options for individuals and local groups, including a consultancy service operated by local development specialists, training modules and business aids. A training programme on business project appraisal will help participants assess the scope for setting up a business.

Small firms with fewer than 50 employees are offered advice and financial incentives through a series of specific programmes. Forbairt can help develop ideas and management skills; grants are also available in connection with employment, improvement of management methods, capital, feasibility studies and manufacturing processes.

S

Grants equivalent to unemployment benefit are available to previously unemployed persons setting up their own businesses (payable during the first six months).

L

The job creation assistance scheme was extended in July 95. It is aimed at helping jobseekers who are difficult to place (the older and long-term unemployed).

UK

Business start-up is one of the objectives of the SRB (Single Regeneration Budget) challenge fund for urban and rural regeneration. The start-up of some 80,000 businesses will be supported by the SRB over the next 7 years, with the nature and extent of support varying locally.

Under the programme "Training for Work" (the principal government training programme for the long-term unemployed), persons planning to set up a business can obtain enterprise training and advice.

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Placement services

Some countries are attempting to make their public placement service more efficient while retaining a monopoly; many others are trying to achieve the same by partial privatisation of the service. Decentralisation/deconcentration of the public service and/or opening up of the market to private firms are the main features of recent reforms.

A

The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice - AMS) is responsible for consultation, guidance and placement services as well as active measures aimed at the unemployed (including training). Since July 1994 the AMS has no longer been part of the central administration, having been transformed into a tripartite organisation. It is managed by a board, on which the social partners and administration are represented, and has a staff of 4 200. Duties not directly connected to the labour market, such as payment of other financial social benefit, have been transferred to other departments or social security institutions. The AMS will apply a more rigorous policy of decentralised decision-making and cooperation with local and regional authorities.

B

There are three public employment services in Belgium: the Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding (VDAB), the Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et l'emploi (FOREM) and the Office régional bruxellois de l'Emploi (ORBEM). These three services are administered by bipartite management committees, and both the VDAB and FOREM have sub-regional services (18 and 12 respectively). They also offer support services (psychological, social et medical) and provide information on vacancies ("Job Service", permanent information forums, etc.). The VDAB and ORBEM have set up an outplacement service, which is available at the employer's request and subject to the prior agreement of the workers concerned.

D

The Federal Employment Service (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit) has 184 main offices and 640 sub-offices providing country-wide job placement and guidance for all categories of job and employment, free of charge.

DK

The National Labour Market Authority (Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen) is in charge of the practical administration of the public placement service. The employment service has 14 regional offices, each of which has several local offices (total of around 96). According to the law, persons on unemployment benefit and other job seekers are entitled to certain forms of assistance from the public placement service, including information, vocational counselling, registration for unemployment benefit and vocational training. Each region has a labour market council which is composed of representatives of the social partners and regional and local authorities. They are responsible for organising local measures for the unemployed and are also involved in managing job vacancies and training programmes.

E

The National Employment Institute (INEM) is responsible for the public placement service in Spain. It is an autonomous administrative body under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. It has a General Council (tripartite), an Executive Committee (tripartite) and a Director-General appointed by the Council of Ministers. The INEM has 52 provincial delegations and around 700 local employment offices. It also offers ancillary services such as vocational guidance and job classification and is responsible for management of the unemployment insurance scheme. The provincial delegations process applications for benefits and administer payments.

F

The National Employment Agency (ANPE) is responsible for the public placement service in France. It is a national public legal entity under the authority of the Employment Ministry, and is financially autonomous. The ANPE has a tripartite Board of Administration and a Director-General appointed by the Council of Ministers. There are 22 regional directorates, 100 departmental directorates and 7000 local employment agencies. The ANPE helps people looking for work, training or vocational guidance and helps employers recruit or redeploy workers. It also manages the register of job seekers, produces statistics and constitutes one of the instruments of employment policy.

FIN

The Employment Services Act abolished the state monopoly from the beginning of 1994, and hence also private firms may provide employment services. There is no organised co-operation yet between private firms and public employment services, and the public sector has an important role in providing services.

The Ministry of Labour is responsible for public placement services. The country is divided into 13 regional districts and there are 183 employment offices. The employment offices provide also labour market training, vocational training, vocational guidance, an information service regarding training and occupations, and vocational rehabilitation for the disabled. All services are free of charge to employees, and almost all, but some special services, are free for employers.

A number of universities, with financial support from the State, have recently started to develop placement services in co-operation with public employment offices to help their graduates find employment.

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Placement services

GR The National Employment and Labour Organisation (OAED) is responsible for the public placement service in Greece. It is an administratively autonomous legal entity under the authority of the Ministry of Labour. It has a Governor, who presides over a tripartite Administrative Board. It runs a network of 152 local employment centres and manages its own training centres. The OAED is also responsible for vocational guidance and training (including apprenticeships), management of unemployment benefit and family allowances, and implementation of programmes to promote employment.

NL The Employment Service is responsible for placing jobseekers, particulary those at disadvantage in the labour market; the improvement of the placeability of jobseekers; filling of vacancies; and supplying information and advising about labour market developments and training opportunities.

There is also a temporary employment agency (START) which is closely linked to the employment service. It has a tripartite structure, including government representatives. Its objective is to provide temporary work for job seekers who are difficult to place.

In October 1995 the government proposed a new employment act to replace the law of 1990. The government will withdraw from the CBA (Central Board) and in future it will consist of eleven member nominated by royal decree. The regional labour market authorities send two representatives, although they have no voting rights.

I The public placement service in Italy has 19 regional offices, 85 provincial offices, and more than 500 local offices. The latter (Uffici Circonscrizionali) are primarily responsible for placement services. In this connection it should be noted that prior authorisation for recruitment has been discontinued (Decree-law No 301, Article 1). Private employers and public financial bodies can therefore recruit directly (ordinary placement, agriculture or entertainment). The provincial offices among other things concern themselves with collective redundancy procedures, advise the Uffici Circonscrizionali and help settle industrial disputes. The regional offices coordinate provincial activities and assess applications for allowances from workers registered with the Special Wage Compensation Fund (Cassa Integrazione Guadagni straordinaria - CIGS). They also administer the mobility lists, the aim of which is to promote employment for certain target groups (women, workers registered with the CIGS). There are also technical project bodies which coordinate supply and demand on the labour market, encourage employment promotion initiatives, promote employment for disadvantaged groups and devise employment policy programmes to harmonise national and regional authority operations on the labour market.

P The Employment and Vocational Training Institute (IEFP) is responsible for placement. Administratively and financially independent, it is run by an executive committee assisted by an administrative board and a supervisory board (tripartite) with advisory functions. The same structure exists at regional level, where there are five regional IEFP delegations. At local level there are 80 employment centres and 25 vocational training centres, as well as two employment/training centres.

The IEFP is also responsible for job information, vocational guidance, and employment programmes and studies. Job seekers who wish to receive unemployment benefit have to register at an employment centre.

In addition to the government employment service, there are also temporary employment agencies and private placement agencies.

IRL The authority responsible for employment and training (FAS) runs a public placement service through a network of 54 offices around the country. These offices provide the interface between job seekers and vacancies and are also linked up to the EURES vacancy management system operated by the European Union. The FAS is responsible for the implementation of training, retraining and vocational guidance. Responsibility for payment of unemployment benefit lies with the Department of Social Security.

S Throughout Sweden there are 360 public placement offices managed by the AMS and open to anyone. Job seekers have access free of charge to all services offered by public offices and private agencies. Employers are required to notify the public employment service of any vacancies.

L The Employment Administration (ADEM), run by a Director-General and directly subordinate to the Ministry of Labour, is responsible for the public employment service in Luxembourg. It has a monopoly on placement activities, and offers vocational guidance services. It also has responsibilities for vocational training, especially for long-term unemployed young people and the disabled. The ADEM is also responsible for managing the unemployment insurance fund, including benefit payments and eligibility checks. It has three regional offices.
There are a number of recruitment consultancy firms, and also non-profit associations which, as an extension of their counselling and social reintegration activities, may also find jobs for the people with whom they are concerned.

UK Employers are encouraged to notify "Jobcentres" of any vacancies, especially those which could be filled by unemployed persons. Vacancies are presented to job seekers, who make their own choice and are then seen by a member of jobcentre staff to confirm suitability. The UK's public employment service found jobs for over 1.9 million unemployed persons during 1995/96 through a national network of 1100 centres. The Employment Service is a public agency which is required to respect certain objectives laid down in an annual agreement.

The Employment Service is responsible for the payment of unemployment insurance benefit and anti-fraud checks. Responsibility for laying down policy, conditions of entitlement, the amount of benefit, etc. lies with the Department of Social Security.

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Guidance, information and assessment

The trend is towards more emphasis on counselling, information and monitoring, both in general terms and after job seekers have been registered with employment agencies for a certain length of time. In most countries self-service (job clubs, etc.) is also playing a greater role, one of the factors here being the increasing computerisation of placement services.

DK

In 1994 the public placement service introduced a system of individual action plans (individuel handlingsplan), which must be drawn up for persons who have been unemployed for six months. The plan involves an interview with a placement service official, who gives advice on active labour market measures and helps analyse the person's career development and employment prospects. The action plan is revised when needed.

A

The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) provides information on the trends and needs of the labour market and on the services it provides. It also publishes details of vacancies and job seekers, as well as statistics and studies. A self-service system encourages personal initiative. Radio, TV and other media cooperate on a regular basis to disseminate information on the state of the labour market and public placement services.

Employment promotion foundation (Arbeitsstiftung)
Companies expecting to reduce their workforce significantly may, with the agreement of the works council, set up employment promotion foundations (Arbeitsstiftungen), which enable redundant workers to participate in various measures designed to assist retraining/redeployment.

E

Employment agencies offer a vocational guidance service in the form of selecting workers for job vacancies; vocational qualifications of workers; collective information on the labour market, occupations and trades, and job seeking techniques, through briefing sessions and distribution of publications on available options for various types of training; individual vocational guidance through in-depth interviews and aptitude and motivation tests; motivation and counselling of the long-term unemployed, etc.

B

MONITORING OF THE UNEMPLOYED
The public employment services are obliged to monitor persons who have been employed for nine month (under the age of 46) and who do not have secondary level qualifications.

The FOREM centres offer intake interviews, information, documentation and guidance to help job seekers make a wise choice, taking account of labour market trends.

Socio-professional guidance and integration centres (COISP) offer courses (7-12 weeks) designed to help participants make the correct choice of career or training.

F

The spread of telematic tools (Minitel system, servers, voice mail, interactive terminals, etc.) will provide job seekers with access to information on vacancies, remote services, and assistance with CV preparation and simple administrative operations.

D

Vocational guidance for young persons is offered in all employment service offices. This takes the form of a free and unbiased guidance service in the choice of first career. Furthermore almost all employment service offices are equipped with vocational information centres, in which an extensive self-service computer information service is available to all. The Guidance service is also a point of access to special guidance services such as medical, psychological and technical guidance services.

The unemployed and jobseekers can also make use of the employment guidance service, which gives advice in all matters to do with qualifications (continuous training, retraining) as well as vocational reintegration.

FIN

The employment offices are responsible for counselling, placement services, information services as well as providing labour market training, active employment measures and special services for the disabled. The computerised data system covers the whole country including information on jobseekers, vacancies, training courses and education.

The main forms of employment services comprise individual service, information services and group services. There is a tendency to concentrate the individual service on placement and vocational guidance in the most demanding client situations and otherwise to increase the use of information services and group services. The jobseekers can get information about vacancies and training via the self-service terminals, from special journals and from a nation-wide telephone system.

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Guidance, information and assessment

GR

The OAED organises vocational guidance by encouraging specific studies of labour market trends and prospects, and of occupations which are growing or declining in importance. Vocational guidance is the responsibility of special services, which provide information on career and training options for all workers, but particularly for young people joining the labour market. The OAED is also responsible for vocational retraining for the disabled; it is required to organise any necessary measures and has a number of special offices for this purpose.

NL

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for guidance for those at school. Difficult cases are referred to private agencies, and the persons concerned can obtain financial aid from the Vocational Guidance Programme, though they must also contribute to the costs, depending on their income. In 1993 the provision of training and career guidance was reorganised and will in future be provided at regional level.

I

P

In addition to the information and advisory services provided by the IEFP, the following instruments are used:
- Individual monitoring plans, with the aim of preventing long-term unemployment among the under-45s.
- Job clubs offering the unemployed a personalised follow-up through the organisation of support activities in which they participate directly.
- UNIVA (see 5.1.1).

Schools run by the Ministry of Education offer psychological counselling and career guidance services.

IRL

"JOB FACILITATORS"
"Job facilitators" are appointed by the Department of Social Welfare and work in its regional offices. Their task is to take stock of measures undertaken with regard to local employment, teaching, training and work experience in order to advise the unemployed (particularly the long-term unemployed) and help them make use of the available possibilities.

The FAS has a computerised system which ensures that details of all vacancies are available in all its offices. There is also a self-service system for information on vacancies.

S

Job seekers looking for information on their employment prospects and, where applicable, the necessary qualifications can obtain personal advice from the public employment services.

Those who need to attend vocational retraining and/or require additional advice can contact the Vocational Skills Institute (AMI), which has at its disposal a wide range of resources in respect of traineeships, practical guidance, adaptation to the working environment, etc.

Activities aimed at job seekers last at least five days (full-time). Participants learn to draft a job application and to contact employers directly, on their own initiative. Programmes may also include mock interviews.

L

UK

All Employment Service offices provide a structured and coherent advisory and information service, which starts on the first day a person makes a claim for benefit and intensifies as unemployment lengthens and getting back to work becomes more difficult. This service is based on regular interviews, with an adviser, at which the jobseeker is able to discuss his or her situation, consider the options available and agree a course of action which, if taken, will offer the best prospects of finding a job.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Financial assistance to job seekers

Assistance to enable the unemployed to join the labour market takes various forms, e.g. allowances for the purchase of clothing, placing newspaper advertisements, training, travel to interviews, etc. Following the shift from passive to active measures, these more or less "conventional" types of assistance are becoming more important in certain Member States.

DK

Financial assistance can be provided by decision of the regional labour market council for the travelling expenses, overnight stays, etc. of persons travelling in connection with a job application and of job seekers attending company information meetings.

A

The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) gives financial assistance to persons and companies or organisations which apply measures promoting the following: removal of financial barriers to employment; preparation of access to employment and of training or apprenticeship training; integration or reintegration into the labour market; safeguarding of existing jobs.

List of the various instruments: allowances for expenses relating to job applications and interviews and the purchase of work clothing and tools.
Allowances for subsistence and participation expenses, for travel, accommodation and meals; for vocational training.
Promotion of employment in companies: allowances for integration of problem groups into companies; compensation for under-performance; for reintegration after parental leave.

E

B

F

Cooperation agreement (Convention de cooperation)
The agreement of 8 June 1994 between the social partners created cooperation agreements, under which companies which recruit job-seekers who have been drawing unemployment benefit for more than eight months are paid a subsidy by the unemployment insurance scheme.
Employers signing up to these agreements are paid, for a maximum of one year, a recruitment subsidy based on the amount of benefit which the job-seeker would have drawn if he had remained unemployed.

D

Financial assistance is available to take up employment with the objective of avoiding unemployment through an increased mobility. Grants are offered to the unemployed and those threatened with unemployment to assist with costs of applying for jobs, moving home, equipment for work, as well as bridging grants and employment guidance.

Furthermore, the assistance outlined in point 5.2.1 for labour market reintegration is also available.

FIN

Financial assistance for labour market training consists of a training allowance, a subsistence allowance and reimbursement of accommodation costs. It is granted to applicants selected for labour market training. The amount of the training allowance is the same as unemployment benefit.

The employment services cover the cost of submitting an application for training. Applicants may receive help with travel expenses incurred in obtaining information on the training offered and the associated conditions and in attending selection and aptitude tests and medical examinations. Students selected may also obtain a grant for travel to the training venue where it is outside their own area.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Financial assistance to job seekers

GR

NL

The framework regulation on integration into working life (KRA) was amended in 1995. The KRA aims to advance the (re)integration of the unemployed into regular jobs or work experience placements. The unemployment duration for entitlement to monitoring and training subsidies was reduced. The grant level was also reduced in a number of cases.

I

ASSISTANCE FOR JOB SEEKERS
Job seekers registered with the CIGS or on mobility lists may be given financial assistance for guidance and support services, to help them become reintegrated into the labour market, including cooperatives or self-employment.

P

- Payment for advertisements in the regional press.
- Financial assistance for self-placement, to encourage the long-term unemployed (at least 2 years) to find employment themselves.

IRL

Under the new work experience programme WORKPLACE, unemployed persons or lone parents (or travellers, Rehabilitation Board referrals) in receipt of payment for at least six months, will be eligible for a work placement of up to five weeks with an employer. The participants will continue to be paid their welfare entitlements and a premium will be provided to assist towards costs of travel and meal expenses. The focus on WORKPLACE will be on those who are employment ready.

S

Work Place Introduction (see also 4.x)
Vocational training and work experience for unemployed persons aged 20 years of more for a period of 6 months. The employer has to pay a contribution of SEK 2000 per month. The participant is given a training allowance.

L

Extension of reemployment aid in 1995 allowing an income supplement for 4 years to those persons who have been made redundant or in danger of redundancy who are prepared to a take a less well paid job.

There are several recruitment aids for the older and long-term unemployed (reimbursement of social contributions by the employment Fund) which were introduced in July 1993. These assistance schemes depend on age and the length of unemployment and contains certain conditions regarding employment contracts.

UK

1. JOBFINDER'S GRANTS
2. BACK TO WORK BONUS
3. TRAVEL TO INTERVIEW SCHEME
4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT LOANS
5. "JOBMATCH" PROGRAMME

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Geographic mobility

Geographic mobility allowances are designed to facilitate the placement of job seekers outside their own region, possibly even abroad. Assistance is also available for foreign workers to return home. Some countries, e.g. NL, have placed restrictions on the recruitment of foreigners from outside the EU.

DK

Measures to encourage mobility
Payment of travel expenses and an installation allowance to encourage employment of job seekers in regions where there is a shortage of workers with specific skills.

A

The objective of measures to encourage regional mobility is to help persons find work, keep their job or attend a training course away from where they live. Measures include allowances for travel to interviews, removal, regular travel between home and work, and subsistence expenses at the place of training or employment.

E

The law introduces new forms of vocational classification and encourages mobility between equivalent categories. The transfer of workers which requires a change of residence is justified if due to economic, technical, organisational or production reasons. The transfer can be individual or collective. A collective transfer must be negotiated with worker representatives. In the absence of agreement, the transfer can be undertaken but the worker can take the matter before the court. Workers who accept the transfer have the right to compensation to cover personal and family expenses arising through the transfer. The period of notice is 30 days. Temporary posting of workers which do not exceed 12 months covering a period of 3 years are also permissible.

B

Assistance towards unemployed persons' resettlement costs.
Aid for unemployed persons who have to move in order to take up a new job.

F

In the case of companies in economic difficulties, the State may contract to provide financial assistance for workers who agree to move at least 50 km to find another job.

Job seekers who agree to move in order to look for work also qualify for a grant to cover the cost of travel, an extended stay away from home and, where applicable, removal.

FOREIGN COMPANIES
French social legislation will in future apply to employees of foreign companies providing services in France.

EMPLOYMENT ABROAD: ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE
Companies employing French citizens under the age of 26 abroad can obtain a temporary exemption from social security contributions to the appropriate fund.

D

INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS
Language courses and courses in preparing for working life, aimed mainly at workers and training course participants from former countries of recruitment. Reintegration of foreigners returning to their own country. Grants for workers returning home. Employment incentives. Financial assistance to encourage geographic mobility.

EUROPEAN GUIDANCE CENTRES
Establishing of several programmes to encourage mobility at European level (12 centres, electronic mail and training of advisers).

Limitation of the number of foreign workers
Limitation of the number of foreign workers in the construction industry depending on the size of firms.

FIN

Travel expenses may be reimbursed to unemployed job seekers to enable them to attend an interview, sign a contract or start a new job. Assistance is designed to encourage such persons to seek employment outside their own area, thus promoting geographic mobility within the country.

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GR

EMIGRANTS RETURNING TO THE COUNTRY

Teaching for emigrants returning to Greece. Language courses and training for immigrants (of Greek origin) from the former USSR. They also receive financial assistance during a period of 30 months after their arrival in Greece. The amount can be given for a maximum of three times in the AM period.

NL

NEW LAW ON EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS

The essential aspect of this law is a restriction on the granting of work permits, which are refused if a priority job seeker is available (NL citizens, foreign workers legally resident in NL, EC and EFTA citizens).

I

P

Geographic mobility incentives aimed at the full-time or part-time unemployed and part-time workers willing to accept job offers involving removal. The Lisbon and Oporto districts are excluded. Housing allowance increased by 10%.

IRL

1. Ireland is actively involved in the EURES programme.
2. The FAS employment services promote mobility within Ireland by operating a register of job seekers and vacancies together with a matching-up service.

Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd (RRI), an organisation supported by the Department of the Environment, helps to resettle families from the larger urban areas into the depopulated rural areas, usually in private rented housing. To help make home ownership a viable option a low interest mortgage scheme jointly funded by the Housing Finance Agency (through the local authority), Bank of Ireland and RRI and specifically aimed at low income households was launched in July 1996.

S

Allowances for travel expenses may be granted to persons seeking or accepting work outside their own region. Grants are paid to employers in certain regions who create a new job and employ a member of the family of a person who has removed.

Grants of up to SKr 10 000 are available to unemployed persons who leave their own region to work elsewhere (cannot be their first job after completing studies). They must stay in the job for at least 6 months.

L

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS

Provisions governing the employment of foreigners (tripartite agreement of 8.3.94).

Aid for geographic mobility (pursuant to the tripartite agreement), covering allowances for travel, dual residence and resettlement.

UK

In the Employment service geographic mobility is facilitated by the LMS (Labour Market System) and the Overseas Placing Unit, and also by the local Euroadvisers.

Worker mobility is facilitated by the Travel to Interview Scheme (see 4.2.6), which helps the unemployed with the cost of attending an interview.

The Back-to-Work Bonus (see above) can also be used to encourage mobility. It is intended to help cover additional expenditure associated with returning to work and could be used to help cover the cost of resettlement in another region.

4

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Private employment agencies

Private employment agencies are now permitted in practically all Member States. They already existed in the past as temporary employment agencies, but may now also offer a regular placement service (subject to certain conditions which vary from country to country).

DK

Since July 1990 private employment agencies have been able to operate without prior authorisation by the authorities. The public employment service pays private agencies for certain specific services.

A

Private employment agencies have been authorised since 1994. In order to operate, they must obtain an operating licence and be registered with the Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice), which checks compliance with certain requirements.
Temporary-employment agencies require an operating licence from the trade supervisory authorities. The main contract between the agency and the worker must meet minimum statutory requirements. The period of notice is at least 14 days. Remuneration must be appropriate and customary for the location concerned and be at least the minimum laid down by the collective agreement for the relevant sector. It is not permissible for the wages and conditions of employment of workers in the host company to be adversely affected or their jobs to be put at risk as a result of the use of temporary workers. Even if the temporary worker cannot be given as much work as anticipated, the agreed remuneration must be paid. It is not permissible for any agency to offer job-placement and temporary-employment services at the same time.

E

Up to the end of 1993, Spanish legislation did not allow private employment agencies. Law No 10/1994 of 19 May removed the obligation on employers to recruit only via the public placement service (INEM). Non-profit employment agencies may now be established on the basis of a cooperation contact with the INEM. However, the employer remains obliged to notify the INEM of all employment contracts entered into.

Law No 14/94 of 1 June regulates the activities of temporary employment agencies (empresas de trabajo temporal), as well as the conditions applicable to temporary employment.

B

The Decree of the Flemish Council of 19 April 1995 concerning job placement in the Flemish region forbids the running of employment agencies for profit. The Decree does, however, allow charges for such job-placement services with respect to categories of persons among whom the demand for jobs can clearly not be met by public-sector employment offices. These categories are defined by the government of the Flemish region in line with the opinions or proposals of the Flemish Socioeconomic Council. The Decree also provides for the setting-up of a supervisory committee for a given area of activity. Other important regulations applying in Flanders: job placement agencies may not request any payment from job-seekers; these activities are reimbursed by the government of the Flemish region according to a fixed scale of charges, and registered agencies must sign a cooperation agreement with the Flemish Employment and Placement Service (VDAB).

F

Certain public establishments or jointly managed organisations may engage in public placement activities. To do so they must be approved by, or sign an agreement with the ANPE. This means that even if private organisations are authorised to operate on the market, they remain under the control of the public service.
A bond in the form of a bank guarantee must be provided by establishments operating as temporary employment agencies.
Other operators offer placement-related services. Others offer a placement advisory service, but it is difficult to assess their importance.

D

Private agencies have been authorised since 1994. They require a licence issued by the Federal Labour Office. Issue of a licence is guaranteed by the law as long as the necessary conditions are met, i.e. personal reputation and qualifications, clear financial circumstances, and adequate premises. These conditions for authorisation apply equally to nationals of all EU Member States. Authorisations for placement from and to countries outside the EU are granted for a limited number of occupations.

FIN

Before the new Employment Act came into force, only certain occupational and social organisations could provide placement services free of charge. The Employment Services Act of 1994 abolished the state monopoly. Thus private firms are also allowed the provide employment services. No licence is required. The only restriction is that these firms are not allowed to charge employees for placement services.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Private employment agencies

GR Since 1931 Greek law has banned private employment agencies operating on a commercial basis. Infringements are punishable by fines or imprisonment. Employers are required to report all recruitment and redundancies, but not vacancies. Nevertheless, studies have revealed the existence of illegal private agencies, which operate under a variety of guises (as insurance agencies, etc.). The ban does not cover non-profit operations.

NL The 1990 law on employment services authorises the establishing of private employment agencies offering a full range of services and acting as intermediaries between job seekers and employers. Agencies must obtain a licence before starting operations. The law states that their activities must not be detrimental to workers' interests or to good relations between labour market players. These general requirements may be supplemented by instructions from the Central Board (CBA). The government has proposed the abolition of this system of permits.

I In Italy there is a State monopoly on placement, and private employment agencies are prohibited.

A series of recent decree-laws (the latest one being n° 301/96) have helped simplify procedures for access to employment by creating a mechanism for notifying ex-post the public employment service of an employer's recruitment of a worker instead of the notification previously necessary.
A draft law (May 1995) covers the limited and controlled creation of private employment agencies.

P Private employment agencies must have prior authorisation from the Ministry of Labour, based on the opinion of the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training. The law (D.L. n° 358 of 17.10.89 and Despacho of 11.11.89) also lays down the fees which workers may be charged, which vary depending on the duration of the contract entered into. Legally, a distinction has been made between placement agencies and temporary employment agencies only since 1989.

IRL Private employment agencies have been permitted in Ireland since 1971. They must have prior authorization from the Minister for Enterprise and Employment. This authorization must be renewed every year. Agencies may not charge a fee merely for agreeing to seek employment for another person or for agreeing to seek persons who will give or accept employment.

S Private placement agencies (except those for seamen) have been authorised since July 1993. Jobseekers have free access to all services offered by such agencies. Employers have to pay a fee for the service to the agency.

L The Law of 21.2.76 makes placement the exclusive responsibility of the Employment Administration, whose services are free of charge. Employers are required to notify the public employment service of any vacancies. Infringements are punishable by a fine. Several recruitment consultancy firms are active in Luxembourg, but are required to observe the 1976 Law, especially with regard to vacancies. There are also a number of non-profit associations.

UK Licensing requirements for private placement and temporary work agencies introduced by the Employment Agencies Act 1973 were abolished in January 1995. The current law requires all private agencies to comply with minimum standards of conduct intended to protect users of agencies from harm. Inspectors from the Department of Trade and Industry investigate all complaints and other information about agencies and undertake random checks. Breaches of the law are liable to prosecution in a magistrates' court and are subject to a maximum fine of £5,000. Agencies may also be prohibited from operating by order of an industrial tribunal.

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Recent measures

The reduction of registered seasonal unemployment is fostered through agreements with the industries concerned.

Overall reform of the Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) in July 1994 (see 4.2.4).

DK The transitional allowance for persons aged 50-59 to take them up to early-retirement age has been abolished because of changes in the labour force (older labour force).

A

1. ABOLITION OF SPECIAL BENEFIT FOR WOMEN AGED 54 AND OVER AND MEN AGED 59 AND OVER
2. INTRODUCTION OF A BONUS/PENALTY SYSTEM INTO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN ORDER TO PROTECT OLDER EMPLOYEES
3. MORE PRECISE WORDING OF CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFIT
4. COMBATING BENEFIT FRAUD BY IMPOSING TOUGHER PENALTIES AND RESTRICTING OPPORTUNITIES TO EARN INCOME WHILE RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT
5. LIMITATION OF PARENTAL LEAVE BENEFIT
6. NEW TRAINING SCHEME FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION SERVICE

E In order to reduce passive expenditure and encourage active job seeking by the unemployed, several changes have been made to the contributions system. The period of eligibility has been raised to 12 months; the rate of replacement has been reduced; benefits have been made conditional upon active job seeking; minimum allowance 75% of minimum wage for an unemployed person without children and 100% for an unemployed person with children.

The Integrated Employment Services Plan (SIPES) makes provision for agreements with public or private non-profit institutions (placement agencies etc.), the aim being to make it easier for unemployed persons to seek and obtain work.

B The plan introducing individual monitoring of job-seekers who have been unemployed for more than 10 months has been extended until 1996 and will focus more on the low-skilled.

F A new contract for progress has recently been concluded between the State and the ANPE, resulting in a shift of ANPE activities towards the collection of information on vacancies from companies. The ANPE may sign agreements with bodies such as temporary employment organisations. Another aim is better coordination with the unemployment insurance scheme responsible for payments to job seekers.

The agreement of 8 June 1994 introduces cooperation agreements by which the unemployment insurance scheme grants aid to companies which recruit job seekers who have been on unemployment benefit for more than eight months. The amount corresponds to the total benefit which workers would have received had they still been unemployed, and is payable for a period of six months. A budget of FF 500 million has been allocated for 1995.

D Recent measures have been designed to combat undeclared work, illegal employment and abuse of social benefits.

FIN The reform of the employment assistance system entered into force at the beginning of April 1995. Outcome: fewer types and simplification of assistance; extension of eligibility to include persons unemployed on an irregular basis; greater scope for combining assistance with training and vocational guidance.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Recent measures

GR

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT
On the recommendation of the Minister of Labour, unemployment benefit is to rise by 30% (minimum DR 60 000).

NL

I

P

Establishment of an Innovation in Training Committee with the task of preparing instruments and promoting initiatives for innovation in vocational training and ensuring coordination with Community initiatives and programmes (Council of Ministers Resolution No 17/96 of 21/3/96).

IRL

The Government continued with the establishment of the Local Employment Service which will reinforce active measures for the long-term unemployed. It also began restructuring its Community Employment Programme to give more focus to the long-term unemployed. A special progression programme is being introduced for 18/19 year olds.

- The Family Income Supplement (FIS) has been improved and its scope extended;
- A new one year recruitment subsidy (Jobstart) was introduced for employers who take on people who are over 3 years unemployed.
- In work benefits for long-term unemployed returning to work improved. Indirect labour costs were reduced, especially for low income earners.
- The Back to Work Allowance Scheme was extended and investment in vocational training increased.

S

The Swedish government has placed at the disposal of the public employment service a special fund for 1995/96 for the recruitment of up to 3 200 new officials for the public placement department, which will then have one official for approximately every 50 job seekers.

4

L

The operation of the public employment service is being improved. To this end, a series of decisions has been taken ie: notification of every vacancy; reassessment of job brokering and the operation of placements; consolidation of structures needed to take stock of people with difficulties; an information and publicity campaign to promote available measures. The improved operation of public employment services forms a central focus in employment policy.

A permanent employment committee was created through the law of 31/5/95 in order to ensure the monitoring of the labour market, notably in conjunction with the Multi-Annual Programme for Employment. The law of 31/7/95 created a pool of qualified instructors to develop the psycho-socio-pedagogical framework for jobseekers. The development of the concept of sponsoring individuals jointly between the employment administration and groups of people who could be considered for such sponsorship.

UK

1. FAMILY CREDIT
2. ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR THOSE RETURNING TO WORK
3. JOB SEEKER'S ALLOWANCE
4. EARNINGS TOP-UP
5. NEW DISCRETIONARY FUND FOR THE TECs
6. PROJECT WORK PILOTS

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In-work benefits

UK

1 FAMILY CREDIT

A non-contributory benefit designed to ensure that families do not find themselves worse-off in work than out of it, thus providing an incentive for unemployed people to return to work and stay in work. It also aims to ensure that net family income should not reduce as earnings rise and other income-related benefits are withdrawn. To be eligible, families must have at least one dependent child and the claimant (or partner, if there is one) must be working for at least 16 hours a week. The amount payable depends on the family's income, how many children there in the family and their ages. In May 1996 Family Credit was paid to over 692,000 families with an average payment of over £55 per week. In 1995/96 the total budget was almost £1,862 million financed from general revenue.

In-work benefit for people without dependent children: see 4.X

2 DISABILITY WORKING ALLOWANCE

A non-contributory tax-free social security benefit for some disabled people who work for 16 hours a week or more and who have an illness or disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. It aims to provide an incentive for disabled people who wish to return to work. To be eligible, disabled people must be working 16 hours a week or more, have a relevant qualifying benefit and have £16,000 or less in capital. At 30 September 1996, 10,213 people received DWA at an average weekly payment of £57.

A

Financial assistance to job seekers

UK

1 JOBFINDER'S GRANTS

- Target group: people who have been unemployed for more than two years.
- Objective: to encourage unemployed people to find and accept a wider range of jobs by covering some of the expenses they incur before receiving their first wage.
- Procedure: Persons who accept a low-paid full-time job after being unemployed for at least two years are entitled to a single jobfinder grant to help them cope with reintegration. 25 000 grants are available in 1996-97 at a cost of £5m.

2 BACK TO WORK BONUS

As from October 1996, this bonus will enable persons receiving the jobseeker's allowance or income support and working part-time to build up a credit of up to £1000. The sum will be paid out to them when they lose entitlement to benefit due to the number of hours worked or an increase in the amount of earnings received.

3 TRAVEL TO INTERVIEW SCHEME

This scheme provides financial assistance to people who have been unemployed for more than 13 weeks and have to travel away from their place of residence for a job interview. During 1996-7, 38,500 opportunities are available at a cost of £1.6m.

4 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LOANS

Individuals looking to finance vocational training of their own choice may apply to four commercial banks for a loan. The government pays the interest on the loan during the training period (maximum two years). If, on completing training, the borrower is then registered as unemployed and applies for benefit, he or she may ask the bank to defer repayments for up to five months. In 1995/96 , these loans helped more than 13,000 people invest £47.2m in their own vocational education and training.

5 "JOBMATCH" PROGRAMME

This pilot programme, launched in 1995, is designed to encourage the long-term unemployed to consider a part-time job as a stepping-stone back towards full-time earnings. An allowance of £50 a week for 26 weeks is paid to persons who take a part-time job (minimum 16, maximum 30 hours a week) and leave the unemployment register. Participants are encouraged to take up vocational training and can take advantage of vouchers to the value of £300 to enable them to purchase appropriate training. Pilot schemes operating in London, Lincolnshire and north-west England are expected to help 3 000 long-term unemployed persons per year until 1997/98.

A

1 ABOLITION OF SPECIAL BENEFIT FOR WOMEN AGED 54 AND OVER AND MEN AGED 59 AND OVER

Special benefit used to be paid to unemployed men aged 59 and over and to unemployed women aged 54 and over who had been in employment subject to unemployment insurance contributions for at least 180 months within the last 25 years. The benefit consisted of unemployment benefit plus a 25% supplement. This special benefit has now been abolished. To partially compensate for this, the income of spouses or live-in partners will be deducted at a considerably reduced rate from emergency welfare benefit (Notstandshilfe) for women aged 54 and over and men aged 59 and over.

2 INTRODUCTION OF A BONUS/PENALTY SYSTEM INTO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN ORDER TO PROTECT OLDER EMPLOYEES

If an employer takes on a worker aged 50 or over, his unemployment insurance contributions are reduced by half; if a worker is at least 55 years old when taken on, the employer's unemployment insurance contribution is dispensed with altogether.
If, however, an employer terminates the employment of such a worker, he must make a one-off payment ("penalty") to the unemployment insurance scheme. The amount of such payment is derived from a specific percentage of the unemployment benefit payable multiplied by the number of months up until the date the employee concerned would in theory be eligible to take early retirement. This one-off payment may not exceed 126% of 7/6 of an employee's annual salary.

3 MORE PRECISE WORDING OF CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFIT

A new condition of eligibility for benefit has been introduced in the Unemployment Insurance Act (Arbeitslosenversicherungsgesetz), or rather a condition of eligibility intrinsic to the Act has been set out in greater detail. The only persons still entitled to benefit are those who, among other things, are available for work. This means that they can and may take up a job, and that they are willing and able to work and are unemployed. A job can and may be taken up by anyone who is available for any employment normally offered on the jobs market which complies with statutory provisions and any relevant collective agreements, which the unemployed person can be reasonably expected to carry out and which is subject to social insurance contributions, and who is entitled to reside in Austria and take paid employment (aliens).

4 COMBATING BENEFIT FRAUD BY IMPOSING TOUGHER PENALTIES AND RESTRICTING OPPORTUNITIES TO EARN INCOME WHILE RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

If unemployed persons refuse to accept a job which they could be reasonably expected to do, they will lose their benefit entitlement for six (previously four) weeks, and for eight weeks if they repeatedly refuse to accept such a job.
If a person receiving benefit is caught doing an undeclared job, they must pay back at least two weeks' unemployment benefit and will lose a further eight weeks' entitlement. If an unemployed person in receipt of benefit earns more than ÖS 3 000 in a temporary job, he then receives no unemployment benefit for the whole of the month concerned.

5 LIMITATION OF PARENTAL LEAVE BENEFIT

Under the previous arrangements, parental leave benefit was paid until a child reached the age of 2 years, but will now be paid only until the child is 18 months old. Benefit may, however, be granted for two years if the other parent (usually the father) also takes parental leave.

6 NEW TRAINING SCHEME FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION SERVICE

A new scheme is being developed for more intensive preparatory instruction for employees of the Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice), which will give them a high level of initial training. The first group completed this training at the beginning of 1995. It is intended that, in the medium term, this new scheme will replace the current training arrangements.

UK

1 FAMILY CREDIT

From April 1996, existing help with the cost of childcare in FC was increased to £60 a week. Worth up tp £42 a week extra in FC.
From July 1996, additional help in FC for those working 30 hours or more a week. Currently worth £10.30 a week.
Faster service introduced in summer 1996 which means that most new claims from employed people cleared within one week.

2 ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR THOSE RETURNING TO WORK

From April 1996, persons who have been unemployed for more than 6 months have continued to receive the same rate of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for 4 weeks after returning to work.

3 JOB SEEKER'S ALLOWANCE

Benefits for the unemployed will be simplified from October 1996 with the introduction of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) to replace Unemployment Benefit and Income Support for the unemployed.
People will be able to qualify for JSA on the basis of their National Insurance contribution record or on income grounds; but there will generally be one set of benefit rates and rules. The aims of JSA are to improve the operation of the labour market, secure improved administration and better value for money, and improve the service to unemployed people.

4 EARNINGS TOP-UP

A new in-work benefit for people without dependent children - "Earnings Top-up" - will be piloted in eight areas of the country for three years starting October 1996 (cf. Family Credit at 4.2.2). The scope of a scheme for workers of this type, and the use of regional trials before a decision on national implementation are innovatory.

5 NEW DISCRETIONARY FUND FOR THE TECs

The Government announced in November 1995 the creation of a new Discretionary Fund of over £50m over the following three years for TECs. This will be run on a challenge basis, enabling TECs to fund locally devised projects.

6 PROJECT WORK PILOTS

Two pilots testing a new approach to help 18-50 year olds, unemployed 2 years or more, to return to work. 13 weeks' intensive jobsearch help is available followed by 13 weeks mandatory work experience for those who have not found work. The pilots, in Hull and Medway & Maidstone, will run April 1996 - July 1997 and are expected to help around 8,000 people. The government announced in October 1996 plans to extend the approach during 1997.

5. IMPROVING MEASURES TO HELP GROUPS WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY HARD HIT BY UNEMPLOYMENT

5.1 Measures for the young

5.1.1 Integration into the job market
5.1.2 Vocational training in the education system
5.1.3 Transition from school to work
5.1.4 Parity of esteem for vocational training
5.1.5 Second Chance
5.1.6 Job-training-apprenticeship
5.1.7 Access to initial training

5.2 Measures for the long-term unemployed

5.2.1 Reintegration into the job market
5.2.2 Special training programmes

5.3 Measures for older workers

5.4 Measures to promote equal opportunities

5.4.1 Equal pay and equal treatment
5.4.2 Equality audits
5.4.3 Positive actions
5.4.4 Measures for unemployed women
5.4.5 Childcare services (system, provisions)
5.4.6 Individualisation of rights in 1. tax and 2. social protection systems

5.X Recent measures

Annex to chapter 5

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Integration into the job market

One of the priorities of employment policy in Europe, the integration of young people into the job market, is usually reflected by various types of sandwich training (practical traineeships, integration contracts, etc.), with employment and training grants. In some countries (NL, DK) there is a form of guarantee of employment (temporary) for young people. Intermediary organisations (integration undertakings) play an important part.

DK

1. ASSISTANCE TO YOUNG PEOPLE
2. LOCAL ACTIVITY GENERATION ACT

A

1. COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AND THE PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION SERVICE
2. VOCATIONAL INFORMATION CENTRES (BERUFSINFORMATIONSZENTREN)
3. VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE COURSES (BERUFSORIENTIERUNGSKURSEN)

E

The "Escuelas taller" (school workshops) and "casas de oficios" programme have the objective of providing on-and-off-the-job training leading to a qualification for young unemployed people under 25 years.

Apprenticeship contract: for workers between 16 and 25 years. Subsidy of 550.000 Ptas for the conversion of a practical training contract to a full-time permanent contract

Subsidy of 400.000 Ptas to employers who recruit on permanent, full-time contracts long-term unemployed persons under 25 years, or for unemployed persons between 25 and 29 years who have not worked for more than 3 months before the date of the contract

B

1. TRAINEESHIPS AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION
2. PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS
3. INTEGRATION CONTRACTS ("stepping stone" jobs) (Global plan)
4. BRUSSELS REGION - VOCATIONAL TRANSITION GRANT
5. WALLONIAN REGION - MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN
6. INITIAL WORK EXPERIENCE CONTRACTS

F

1. CES (Employment and solidarity contracts)
2. INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS
3. TEMPORARY INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS
4. JOB SEEKERS' CLUB
5. FROM DIPLOMA TO EMPLOYMENT
6. INFORMATION CENTRES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

D

Socio-educational supervision of disadvantaged young people at the start of their recruitment contract

FIN

1. YOUTH PROGRAMME
2. NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR REDUCING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
3. INNOVATIVE WORKSHOPS

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Integration into the job market

GR

FIRST JOB ALLOWANCE
- Special programme (ESPA) addressing to young people (20-29 years old) registered as unemployed for 12 months who enter for the first time in the labour market. Allowance : 25.000 drs for a period of 5 months maximum.
- Special measures for young graduates up to 30 years old. Programmes of practical vocational experience and ability for a period of six months maximum.

Target :Provision of Initial Training to non-specialized young persons. Possibility for unemployed young people with previous training to proceed to further training.

Procedures :Co-operation among competent Ministries of Employment, Education and Ministry of Health, Welfare and Social Security.

NL

Youth Work Guarantee Act (Jeugdwerkgarantiewet JWG)
- Target group: young people up to 21 who have been unemployed for 6 months and young people under 24 who have dropped out of training.

I

1. JOB EXPERIENCE
2. MEZZOGIORNO - EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGIONS

P

1. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (D.L. n° 102 of 29.3.84 and D.L. n° 436 of 23.11.88)
2. INITIAL SKILL TRAINING (D.L. n° 401 of 16.10.91)
3. TECHNOLOGICAL SPECIALISATION MEASURES (D.L. n° 401 of 16.10.91)
4. UNIVA (INTEGRATION INTO WORKING LIFE UNITS)
5. CREATION OF JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
6. INTEGRATION INTO THE JOB MARKET
7. BUSINESS START-UP INCENTIVES (see 4.2.3)
8. PRACTICAL TRAINEESHIPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IRL

Employers recruiting young people under 23 into their first full-time job are exempted from their share of social security contributions (12% for two full years).

S

Young persons aged 18-20 can have periods of work experience arranged by the local authority. A subsidy from the state is given to the local authority for this activity.

L

UK

1. CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS
2. TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP MEASURES (See point 5.1.6)
3. DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

5

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Vocational training in the education system

Many countries have integrated vocational courses into their general education curricula. It is important to distinguish between countries with apprenticeship or dual initial training systems (for example A, D, NL, DK see 5.1.7) in which school-based vocational training principally for technicians/engineers etc.; and those which have school-based vocational training systems like France and Italy where all types of training is carried out in vocational schools.

DK Compulsory education between 6-16. Secondary education contains core and optional subjects. Vocational education is an option (14-16). Post compulsory vocational education is provided through vocational gymnasiums which offer 3-year courses leading to higher level commercial and technical qualifications, which can provide access to higher education. The universities provide degree courses in vocational subjects. The course content is adjusted to meet the needs of the private business sector in fields of job growth.

A Compulsory education is of 9 years duration. Only 2% of school leavers enter jobs without vocational training. Vocational guidance is part of the curriculum for students aged 11 years and over. Vocational training starts at 14 years of age in intermediate and upper secondary vocational schools, at 15 years of age in an apprenticeship (dual system). More than 3/4 of all 15 year olds are in the vocational training system. Upper secondary vocational schools provide students with a post-compulsory general and vocational education to a standard allowing them to pursue an intermediate-level occupation or proceed to university or a specialised institute of higher education. In the post-secondary sector, vocational training is provided by institutes of higher education, colleges and academies.

E Basic vocational education is part of secondary level schooling between 12-16 and part of the "bachillerato" (16-18). Vocational education is also offered as part of post-compulsory "middle-level" education (from 16-18) and as part of "higher level" (18-20). It is provided on a modular basis with duration varying with the occupation concerned. Those over the age limit can obtain access to the relevant level by taking an entry examination.

B Compulsory education between 6-18. Compulsory part-time attendance up to 18 in either school or training in an apprenticeship. There are general, technical, and artistic streams which can lead to higher education and a vocational stream which is aimed directly at employment. The status of vocational education is being progressively raised through closer links between technical and general education. Part-time education and/or training can be combined with part-time work. The universities focus upon academic education and scientific research. Higher education outside universities offers vocational courses of 2-4 years in duration.

F Compulsory education between 6-16. Between 11-13 the system is divided between general and vocational streams. At 15 the choices are to: take a one year alternance-based pre-apprenticeship course; transfer to the vocational lycee for a three year course leading to a craft qualification; or study at the general/technical lycee with a view to entering higher education. The final year of university degrees can include training for a profession. University institutes of technology and high colleges specialise in scientific and technological studies.

D Compulsory education between 6-15. Compulsory part-time education up to 18. The education system is streamed according to ability and provides both general and technical education options. Vocational studies at school also provide access to higher education. Higher technical colleges provide 3 to 4 year courses directed to practical application, particularly in engineering and commerce. Universities offer a range of degree courses in vocational subjects. Technical universities specialise in technology and science based degrees.

FIN Compulsory education is between 7-16. Vocational education is an option and seeks to provide a basis for vocational competence and continuing further studies. University level institutions have continuing education centres which include vocational courses. Polytechnics are to give higher vocational education.
Increased opportunities for vocational training are offered as an alternative to unemployment. Labour market support is not given to the under 20 years old without a vocational education and refusing offered training (or subsidized jobs).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Vocational training in the education system

GR Compulsory education between 6-16. Up to 16 education has a mainly academic orientation. Post 16 students can choose between technical-vocational or general education. Vocational education is provided in comprehensive and vocational lyceums and vocational schools. The first year provides a general vocational orientation, the second a sector and the third a more specific occupation. Technological institutes provide alternance-based technical-level education. The Technical University at Athens provides 5 years courses in technological and science based subjects.

NL Compulsory schooling 5 - 16. There are two mainstreams general and pre-university; and pre-vocational and vocational. Post 16 there are senior vocational education courses from 2 -4 years. Higher vocational education courses are provided by universities. In secondary vocational education there are two main types: apprenticeship or a school-based curriculum including a workplacement. Sectoral social partners are actively involved in defining the standards of qualification on the basis of job profiles. Current policy is directed at strengthening the workplace-component within secondary vocational education as a whole. At the level of higher education, next to academic education by universities, there is provision of higher vocational education by multi-sectoral institutes called 'hogescholen'. The apprenticeship system is alternance-based with 1 - 2 days off-the-job training/education and provided on the basis of a contract between the trainee and the employer.

I Compulsory education 6-14 years. There are plans to raise the school leaving age to 16 and to introduce a new curriculum. The upper secondary-phase (14-18) provides general and technical streams. Technical training courses last five years, the first three years lead to a general qualification, the second two years lead to an occupational qualification at a higher level. The occupational institutes provide general vocational qualifications to facilitate the integration of young people into the labour market, or a final qualification through a regional based training course, or access to university. Universities provide degree level courses in vocational subjects. Free universities offer the same degrees as state universities but are privately funded and have no legal status.

P Compulsory education between 6 - 15. In compulsory education, schools can set up alternative curricula for young people finding it difficult to integrate socially or academically. Such curricula include vocational, technical or artistic training. After the compulsory stage, the system is divided into two main streams general and vocational. Vocational schools for 15 - 18 year olds have been introduced to encourage more young people to take the vocational option. After compulsory education there are three streams of vocational training : apprenticeships; vocational school; and technology courses. Apprenticeship training is available from 14 and provides a basic education certificate and a vocational qualification. Higher education institutions also offer courses leading to vocational diplomas.

IRL Compulsory education between 6-15 (although most start at 4). There are two mainstreams academic general and vocational. For 16 - 18 year olds the leaving certificate vocational programme provides 2 years tuition in a specific technological area. Higher technical and business skills are provided by colleges of further education.

S Compulsory education covers the age group 6/7-16. Of the 16 nationally determined three-year programmes in the upper secondary school 14 are vocationally oriented. Upper secondary education also includes an apprenticeship training programme combining vocational training in a company with education in general subjects.

L 7th to 9th classes offer vocational guidance for students according to their aptitudes and interests. 12 - 15 year olds who have difficulty in following the theoretical courses follow a preparatory course of technical secondary education. The technical secondary education leads to a technical and vocational aptitude certificate, to the degree of technician and technical "baccalaureat" . The technical post-secondary level provides education on alternance or full-time basis. Higher technical education provides technical engineering degrees. Responsibility for paramedical training has been transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Education and Training.

UK Compulsory education between 5 - 16. The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative aimed to increase the number of 14 to 19 year olds studying work related subjects. General vocational qualifications (GNVQs) are being developed for entry into employment or progression to higher education. Much of further education is vocationally oriented available on a part-time or full-time basis. Universities provide degree courses in vocational subjects which in some cases are alternance-based.

5

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Transition from school to work

In accordance with what has been said in 5.1.2., it should be noted that transition from school to work is more difficult in countries without apprenticeship systems. All countries have strengthened links between education and the world of work through closer contacts between schools and enterprises.

DK 93 per cent of a year group start on a course of post-compulsory education, i.e. a course of education building on the 9-10 years basic school.
The vocational education option also includes vocational guidance including visits to and work experience in firms and organisations.

A Occupational information centres, occupational information fairs, education counsellors and vocational counsellors all provide information on employment opportunities. Periods of in-company training are part of the training offered at many intermediate and upper secondary vocational schools and at Fachhochschulen. The greater part of the training provided in the apprenticeship sector is in-company training.

E The school curriculum includes periods spent on training in Work Centres or in enterprises. To promote integration and recruitment, apprenticeship contracts have been agreed. They combine work experience and training in the theory of the occupation chosen, leading to a vocational qualification. At the regional level, employers and educational authorities are involved in planning the provision of training to assist the transition from school to work.

B Methods are being developed to draw up school curricula in the light of the profiles of professional occupations. Work placements also form part of schooling.

F Each young person leaving the education system, whatever their level of education, must be offered vocational training leading to a general qualification either in the form of vocational education or through one of the measures to integrate young people into working life. Enterprises and vocational organisations are involved in developing training content. Over the last two years, the government has encouraged young people to opt for alternance (on-and-off-the-job) training or apprenticeship contracts.

D Closer co-operation between schools and employers and employer associations are being developed, to enable young people to make informed choices about vocational options.

FIN School and working life relationship is promoted by special projects, project learning and technology transfer based on evaluations. Vocational curricula include practical training. Access to apprenticeship has been expanded. It is used as further education path after initial vocational training to support transition into working life. Placement and councelling services are strengthened by labour market and education authorities.

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Transition from school to work

GR

NL

Work placements are available for some pupils (jeugdwerkgarantieplan). Vocational information centres also help school leavers to integrate into working life through counselling and guidance. Regarding the underqualified target group, the government uses a mix of preventive measures to reduce the numbers leaving the educational system without qualifications and additional schooling-facilities linked to job-placement are provided for this category.

I

Transition from school to working life is facilitated by : training courses for 16 to 18 year olds perfected through agreements between enterprises and/or the regions, designed to meet local skill needs; and by setting up apprenticeship systems in enterprises. National agreements have established, within the framework of initial training, training courses linked to specific qualifications. Vocational institutes provide general vocational training leading to: a qualification to help the integration of young people into working life; or to a final qualification after a regional based training course; or to university studies after the senior vocational diploma

P

Training has been introduced as part of all vocational courses aiming to provide a work-like context. This has been almost completed in technology and vocational schools. Vocational introduction measures provide training for a year which also includes practical experience for young people aged 15-21 who did not complete their education who have not obtained a vocational qualification. Pre-apprenticeship training allows young people aged 15-21 to obtain a basic education diploma and at the same time provide access to an apprenticeship or a job.
Also see section 5.1.1.

IRL

Vocational schools are run by vocational education committees on which industry is represented. At 15 there is either a transition year or a vocational preparation course which provides an introduction to work experience for pupils continuing in education. Work experience is provided for 16 - 18 year old studying for the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. The Youthreach programme specifically targets young people in the 15/17 age group who find it most difficult to make the transition from school to work i.e. early school leavers with little or no formal educational qualifications. Youthreach provides up to two years of co-ordinated foundation training, education and work experience.

S

Labour market measures: Placement services, job seeking activities, vocational counselling, various kinds of employment training, temporary public work and recruitment subsidies. Education policy measures: A new apprenticeship training programme within the upper secondary school, workplace training, educational and vocational guidance. Extension of all study programmes of the upper secondary school to 3 years and an obligation on the part of the municipalities to give those who have accomplished a two-year programme the option to study a third year. The municipality has the possibility to take responsibility for the youth between 18 & 10 years of age. They will, according to the local premises, arrange for the youth to participate in vocational training or education.

L

The "work-life" project aims to raise pupils awareness about the world of work and help to inform choices about vocational education. Work placements are provided for some pupils. To help integrate young people between over the age of 16 into working life, vocational guidance and introduction programmes have been re-launched to provide a better basis for work and training.

UK

National objectives for education-business links include offering every young person at least one week of work experience in their last year in compulsory education and a further week for those aged 16-18 in full time education. Funding is available to promote Education Business Links, including teacher exchanges and compacts in which firms offer employment related incentives to young people achieving attainment/behaviour targets. A new consultation document "Equipping Young People for Working Life" has been issued. This seeks views on how to strengthen the work related education curriculum for 14-16 year olds.

5

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Parity of esteem for vocational training

Concerned over the greater value attached to general compared to vocational education, member states have sought to raise the value and reputation of vocational education in a number ways: by making the passage between general and vocational education easier, through publicity campaigns and through the introduction of qualifications which recognise training "on-the-job"

DK

A

Publicity campaigns, information fairs and publications on vocational training are widely distributed.
The following measures are used to sustain and strengthen the attractiveness of vocational training:
- creation of possibilities of transferring to upper secondary vocational education after (and in some cases during) an apprenticeship and promotion of access to higher education for persons without the conventionally required upper secondary education certificate;
- upgrading apprenticeship and vocational education at intermediate school by associating these with entitlements to proceed to more advanced training routes (e.g. courses preparing students for embarking on a Fachhochschule;
possibility of planning careers beyond the initial vocational training phase to take account of continuing training and other qualification opportunities.

E

There are certificates for vocational qualifications and there is party between general and vocational qualifications for training provided by the Ministry of Education.

B

F

The education system has revised and diversified its diplomas, in particular with the creation of the vocational baccalaureat. The Universities have also sought to provide training related more closely to economic needs. The developments in apprenticeships are also leading a reappraisal of vocational education. Work preparation classes at vocational colleges are open to young people from the age of 14. Apprenticeships are being developed through greater involvement of enterprises to re-inforce their role as trainers and the development of apprenticeships in the public sector. All technology diplomas can be studied in the context of apprenticeships.

D

Parity of Esteem is promoted through:
- facilitating access to higher education for persons holding a vocational qualification;
- intensifying training for promotion;
- expanding the range of continuing training qualifications;
- tax-funded training for promotion;
- creating transparency via counselling on training tracks in the vocational sector;
- promoting personnel development schemes (career paths), e.g. on the basis of pilot projects;
- expanding the range of additional qualifications obtainable during a traineeship;
- special promotion measures for the particularly talented;
- exchange schemes.

FIN

Attention is given to the time of transition from completing vocational training and finding employment. Later these follow-up studies might give indications for resource allocations.

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Parity of esteem for vocational training

GR

NL

Graduates of vocational training have a very high success rate on the labour market. Some academic diplomas have considerably less effect. Flexibility to change jobs during a lifetime is stimulated by the inclusion of key qualifications in training curricula. Point of concern is validation of vocational diplomas in view of possibilities for recurrent education. In line with Council Resolution on quality, attractiveness and innovation capacity of vocational training (1994) current policy-attention is drawn to the link between vocational training and tertiary education. Higher Professional Education (HBO) momentarily has an influx of 30 % from Secondary Vocational Education (MBO).

I

P

There is a system of equivalence for vocational training and traditional schooling up to university level.
The different training and education routes are interchangeable (school or vocational routes).
Vocational training qualifications are being promoted in society.
A considerable investment has been made in equipment for schools which offer vocational training.

IRL

S

L

The Ministry of Education and Training has held publicity campaigns to promote parity of esteem between vocational and academic studies.

UK

The UK's framework of qualifications - academic qualifications gained in schools and colleges (eg GCE "A" levels), broad vocational qualifications (eg GNVQs) and work-based training leading to NVQs or equivalents - allows young people to choose a pathway suited to their abilities and aspirations.
These three main pathways offer clear progression routes into and between all qualifications. All can provide effective routes into further training, education and employment. Government has welcomed a major review of 16-19 qualifications which proposes a single clear national framework of qualifications; national traineeships; improving skills for employment; and creation of a national certificate to encourage progress towards national targets. Work is in hand on the recommendations, which are reflected in the June 1996 Competitiveness White Paper.

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126

Second Chance

For young people without academic or vocational qualifications, some countries have specific programmes to bring them back into the training systems, often linking school, training and work.

DK

New courses have been developed to cater especially for young drop outs and groups of young people who are not attached towards school type training and education, and for who for that reason might prefer a more practical line of vocational training. The objective is to give vocational, social and personal qualifications which will enable them to gain a foothold in the labour market or possibility for further training or education. See also point 1.2.1.

A

A number of schemes are provided involving preparation for work, retraining, acquisition of new skills and meeting special needs. There is also the possibility of obtaining school qualifications via the "second chance" learning opportunities open to persons already in employment. The final apprenticeship examination can also be taken after an appropriate training in the "second chance" track.

E

Young people leaving the education system unqualified are offered vocational training. The "schools-workshop" programme focuses upon these young people. Basic general education is also available for workers without a primary studies certificate.

B

All three communities have second chance schemes which allow adults to return to school studies.
Naitonal: industrial apprenticeship - the objective is to permit young people aged between 16 and 18 years (except in the case of derogations allowing the inclusion of over-19s) to learn the profession of an employed worker. This is done by on-the-job training and study: practical training in the profession organized in the enterprise and at the same time theoretical training in a school or in a training centre.
The common declaration on economic redeployment and the promotion of employment in the region of Wallonia stipulates that a training-employment plan will be developed which will aim to ensure that trainees are offered practical work experience in an enterprise along with a vocational training course and also that they have a guaranteed job for a time at least equal to the length of the training period.
The Flemish accord on employment stipulates that the different training schemes for young people will be coordinated with a view to forming a coherent package of theoretical and practical elements.

F

There is a commitment to provide for young people under 2(years who have been unemployed for six months, support measures to improve their employability, including training. For unqualified young people who do not go directly into employment, the personal training credit provides access to training to prepare for entry into employment. There are also opportunities for vocational guidance.

D

In the German system a "basic vocational qualification" is generally understood to involve a vocational traineeship leading to a recognized qualification. Schemes exist to prepare specific target groups for undertaking a vocational traineeship, for example, providing guidance counselling and , motivation schemes, and schemes allowing people no longer at school to obtain school-leaving qualifications. For disadvantaged young people (those without the lower secondary education certificate are deemed to belong to this category), special support measures are available during the vocational traineeship to help them obtain a "basic vocational qualification". Other possibilities whereby young people can obtain a basic vocational qualification are:
- retraining,
- external examination,
- schemes to integrate work and learning.

FIN

Labour market training and tightened labour market support measures try to catch the young drop-outs and those without vocational training.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Second Chance

GR

NL

Policy aims at a starting qualification for all to participate in society and specifically on the labour market (at SEDOC level II). Early school-leavers are monitored and motivated through special measures to attain at least a minimum qualification, in order to reduce the number of people without a formal diploma. This is done through a combination of prevention, reintegration in initial training and extra schemes for persistent drop-outs.

I

P

Advice centres (the UNIVA) have been set up in education establishments training centres and local authority buildings to provide young people entering working life with an information network about the labour market and to follow-up their progress.
In compulsory education, schools can set up alternative curricula for young people finding it difficult to integrate socially or academically. Such curricula include vocational, technical or artistic training.
A second chance school system has been developed for young people over 15 years at all stages of initial and secondary education in the form of modules/units which are available from the third stage of initial education.

IRL

YOUTHREACH. Aimed at providing early school leavers (15/17 years) with another opportunity of co-ordinated training/education.
VOCATIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES SCHEME. Enable adults (21+years) who are long-term unemployed to pursue a range of education and vocational training options.
THIRD LEVEL ALLOWANCE SCHEME. Allows adults (23+years) who are in receipt of unemployment payment for at least six months to pursue a third level-course whilst retaining their unemployment payments.

S

Every young person is entitled to education at upper secondary level up to 20 years of age. Any person in this age group, not having accomplished a programme at upper-secondary level, has the right to be admitted to a programme and to follow an adult education course organised by the municipality. All Swedish municipalities provide adult education covering compulsory and upper secondary level. To a large extent these programmes include training in companies. Training for young people between 20-24 seeks to give them training and practical experience. Employers provide an introduction, guidance and relevant practice for a 6 month period.

L

UK

Guarantee of a training place to 16 and 17 year olds who are not in education or a job, but is extended beyond for certain categories of young people whose first-time entry to Youth Training has been delayed, or who had to leave their course early and who wish to rejoin training for specified reasons. These include young people with a disability, language difficulty, or who have been in custody or care. In England and Wales the Further Education Funding Councils have an obligation to provide sufficient and suitable full-time education for 16-18 year olds.

5

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Job-training-apprenticeship

Mainly as a result of the better integration of apprenticeship training in countries such as Germany and Austria, the extension of apprenticeship training systems is being promoted in many countries. Ireland and UK have recently introduced new assistance programmes, and France has made apprenticeship training a main feature of its integration and training policy.

DK

See 5.1.1

A

1. PROMOTION OF VOCATIONAL AND CONTINUING TRAINING
2. PROMOTION OF APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING
3. PROMOTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY IN-COMPANY TRAINING

E

1. APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS
2. PRACTICAL TRAINING CONTRACTS

B

1. NATIONAL - SANDWICH TRAINING
2. NATIONAL - INDUSTRIAL APPRENTICESHIPS

F

1. APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS
2. SKILL TRAINING CONTRACTS
3. SANDWICH TRAINING
4. REGIONAL - SKILL TRAINING MEASURES

D

NATIONAL

1. Part-time instruction for workers up to the age of 25
2. Vocational training for unemployed persons under 25
3. Employment preparation training
4. Preparation courses (max. duration one year) for young people who are difficult to place
5. ABM programme
- Objective: intensive promotion of vocational training for young people

REGIONAL

6. Training programme for the East
- Objective: to provide a training opportunity for every young person in the new Länder
- Cost: approx. DM 800 million (1994-98); represents 14 000 training places

FIN

Apprenticeship training has been offered in only a limited number of fields. Apprenticeship contracts in new sectors and at higher levels of teaching is a major objective to be achieved in the near future. Apprencticeship training has met with a certain amount of success in recent years. The number of apprenticeship contracts doubled in 1992-93. This method of training is used to provide basic vocational training for young people without qualifications and to facilitate transition to working life (through supplementary apprenticeship training).

Information and awareness campaigns aimed at undertakings are organised in order to boost the efficiency of apprenticeship training.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Job-training-apprenticeship

GR

Measures exist such as:
- initial training (and apprenticeship contracts)
- finance for continuous training
- intrafactory schools
- subsidies for trainees financed by employers' contributions
- ELPEKE

Where for certain vocations training has been acquired through experience, short vocational theory courses are offered.

NL

JEUGDWERKGARANTIE WET
Training and employment sections, see 5.1.1 (1)
- target group: unemployed young people aged 16-21 and those who have dropped out of education

I

JOB EXPERIENCE
Programmes aimed at enabling young people to acquire practical experience have been organised. However, in the Mezzogiorno regions until 31 December 1997 the regional committees may decide to raise the maximum age for employment and training contracts

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING CONTRACTS
- Target group: persons up to the age of 32 (the previous limit was 29, but was amended by Law No 451/94)
- Procedures: 2-year contracts, with reduction in contributions for employers. On expiry of the contract, the employer sends to the relevant employment office a certificate of the training results achieved by the worker.

P

SANDWICH APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SYSTEM

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME
- Target group: young people and white-collar workers.

Development of work experience

IRL

1. YOUTHREACH
2. COMMUNITY YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAMME
3. OPTIONS INITIATIVES FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS
4. APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS (Standards-Based Apprenticeship)

S

1. TRAINING PROGRAMME
2. PROGRAMME FOR THE INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

L

Various forms of counselling, guidance, assistance and labour force integration for young people: introductory traineeships, temporary auxiliary work, in-company preparatory traineeships.

UK

1. MODERN APPRENTICESHIP
2. TRAINING FOR WORK

5

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Access to initial training

All countries provide access to either school-based or work-based initial vocational training, according to the education and training system. Three broad approaches can be distinguished: the dual-system apprenticeship (A, D), school-based systems (F, I, S), "on-the-job" systems (UK). The trend is clearly towards the introduction of forms of on-and-off-the-job training.

A

There are two types of initial training for young people: full-time vocational school (38% of 15-16 year olds) or an apprenticeship (44% of 15-16 year olds). The requirements for taking on an apprenticeship are completion of the compulsory 9 years of education and an apprenticeship contract. Austria currently has approximately 230 apprenticeship occupations in the trade, industry and commerce sectors and 14 in the agriculture and forestry sectors. Generally, four fifths of the training provided on an apprenticeship basis takes place within a company and one fifth at a vocational school; The average duration for apprenticeships is three (maximum four) years. The apprenticeship ends with a final examination.

B

Apprenticeships for young people between 15-18 years can last between 6 months and 2 years and are provided by firms who must obtain approval for the training content. Longer apprenticeships of up to 4 years can be arranged which must provide a combination of general education and vocational training. Training work contracts are open to those aged 18-25 and last between 1-3 years and provide on-the-job training and work experience. For those leaving school under-qualified, access is provided to "promotion sociale" which is training designed to meet the abilities of the individual and provide them with relevant skills for the world of work.

D

All young people from 16 onwards not in general secondary education must enrol in vocational school. Different vocational schools provide different types of vocational education depending upon qualifications level from school. The alternance-based dual apprenticeship system lasts for 3 years (although this can be shortened following studies at the vocational schools). One or two days a week are spent at vocational training colleges providing a combination of vocational and general education. Young people who leave the education system poorly qualified can benefit from a range of supportive counselling measures. For those who do meet the demands of recognised occupations requiring formal qualifications, alternative training offers are made to suit their abilities.

DK

The "Education and Training for All" initiative aims to ensure all young people a course of education on completion of basic schooling. Initial vocational training courses last 2-4 years and are alternance-based. The college based element includes teaching universal and general subjects. Vocational training by technical and commercial colleges and can be delivered on the basis of a training contract between a trainee and an employer.

E

Young people have access to initial vocational training administered by the education system through a number of centres located throughout the whole country. They can follow specific vocational training at 2 levels: ordinary diploma and superior diploma. 900.000 young people are currently following this type of training.
In order that young people do not leave the education system unqualified, a "social guarantee or a training guarantee" which consists of a number of special programmes is being implemented. This will enable young people to receive training integrating them into the labour market or to provide access to training at the "middle-level" for up to 2 years. Young people under 25 insufficiently qualified can also benefit from initial training provision.

F

Young people have the right to vocational training after leaving school. Apprenticeships last for 1-3 years and are open to 16-24 year olds. There are a range of employment and training contracts that provide young people between 16-25 with alternance-based work experience and training for short-term periods ranging from 2-8 months. Some of these focus specifically on helping young people without qualifications. In addition there are longer-term training contracts lasting between 6 months to 2 years. State training centres can provide young people 1-3 years training. The individual training credit enables different elements of courses to be linked together leading a recognised qualification.

FIN

Around 90% of people continue their studies after compulsory education, 35% going into secondary level vocational and 55 % into upper secondary education.

Initial vocational training is provided for 75 % of the age cohort. Higher vocational education (post secondary min 3 years) is provided for 25 % and university education for 20 % of the age cohort. Apprenticeship is expanded unlimitedly for initial vocational education for young people to include school leavers.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Access to initial training

GR

3 year apprenticeships are available post compulsory education. The first year is in an apprenticeship training centre, the second and third years are alternance-based. Intensive training courses are also available to unskilled, lowly-qualified young people (18-26) for 6 to 9 months at vocational training centres.

NL

A following network has been set up to provide advice and support to young people up to 23 who have not obtained at least a craft-level qualification. Additional basic education, literacy and numeracy and vocational preparation courses are available to young people with few qualifications.

I

Publicly funded full-time initial training courses are available for unemployed young people who have finished their compulsory education. They usually last 2 years and can lead towards a qualification for a particular profession. Initial training is also available to those completing the non-compulsory upper secondary-phase and varies in duration from 3 months to 3 years.

Apprenticeships are alternance-based and can last from 3-5 years. Training work contracts are open to people from 15 to 32 (in some regions) and provide uncertificated work-based training. This is a common form of training provision for unqualified young people.

The higher-level vocational qualification (conseguimento della maturita' professionale) provides access to university or can lead to a training course for a regional qualifications.

P

Apprenticeships are open to 14 - 24 year olds and last from 1 - 4 years. In 1991, the government and the social partners signed an agreement to guarantee at least one year initial vocational training to young people, in particular for those leaving the education lowly or unqualified. Pre-training measures are available to help those lowly-qualified to equip and prepare them for a training course. Basic training and "self-training" incorporating a wide range of skills for new occupations are being developed.

IRL

Apprenticeship usually last 4 years with the first year based in training centres and regional technical colleges. The remaining years are alternance based. The social guarantee for young people has developed training programmes for: low-qualified school leavers and those whose skills are inadequate for the labour market; young people completing the leaving certificate as a preparatory course for employment.

S

Initial training is mainly provided within the framework of the upper-secondary school and all of the applicants are accepted. However, many of the pupils have to attend programmes of their second or third choice.
The geographic structure of Sweden embracing many remote areas is a matter of concern in this respect. The system for financial aid to pupils at upper-secondary schools aims at levelling out various preconditions of a geographical or social nature.

L

Apprenticeships last from 2 - 4 years and are based on a contract between trainee and employer. Unemployed young people leaving school without qualification, participate in vocational orientation and initiation courses which provide vocational education in accordance with the individuals needs and may include some in-firm training. Job search support and advice are also provided.6

UK

All 16 - 17 year old young people are guaranteed a youth training place leading to a national vocational qualification or other appropriate goals for those with special learning difficulties.Youth credits have been introduced for 16 - 17 year olds. They have a financial value and trigger payment for training leading to a recognized qualification. Modern apprenticeships for 16-24 year olds (with a particular focus on 16 - 17 year olds) provide employer-based training leading to high level nationally recognised qualifications.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reintegration into the job market

Reintegration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market is usually achieved by priority placement activities or employment subsidies. Some countries (e.g. F, B, NL) have set up intermediary structures (integration undertakings, specialised placement agencies, etc.).

DK

1. ASSISTANCE TO THE UNEMPLOYED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

A

1. INSERTION SUBSIDY FOR SOCIALLY USEFUL WORK (Gemeinnützige Eingliederungsbeihilfe)
2. COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Bebtriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

E

There exist assistance for indefinite contracts and annual programmes for temporary contracts linked to promoting employment.

B

1. PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS See 5.1.1(2)
2. MONITORING OF THE UNEMPLOYED (Plan d'Accompagnement)
3. "THIRD EMPLOYMENT CIRCUIT" (TROISIEME CIRCUIT DE TRAVAIL - TCT)
4. INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Insertion)
5. RECRUITMENT BENEFIT PLAN (Law MB 23.12.94 - Plan avantage à l'embauche)
6. JOBCLUBS

F

1. CES (Employment and Solidarity Contracts)
2. CONSOLIDATED EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS (Contrat Emploi Consolide)
3. INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Insertion)
4. TEMPORARY INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Interim d'Insertion)
5. INTERMEDIARY ASSOCIATIONS (Associations intermédiaires)
6. SIFE (Integration and employment traineeships)
7. FURTHER GUIDANCE MODULE (MOA - Module d'Orientation approfondie)
8. MOBILITY ASSISTANCE (Aide à la mobilité)
9. EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE CONTRACT

D

1. PROMOTION OF PERMANENT RECRUITMENT OF THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED THROUGH WAGE SUBSIDIES (SPECIAL PROGRAMME OF THE FEDERAL G'MENT)
2. PROMOTION OF PROJECTS FOR EMPLOYMENT, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SOCIAL CARE

FIN

1. LAW NO 1158/94

Labour market support measures (with ESF assistance) are targetting the long-term unemployed as a priority target group and individually tailored 'pathways' to employment are designed with a combination of different measures including training and work spells.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reintegration into the job market

GR

NL

1. "WORK POOLS" (Banenpools)
2. "JOB CLUBS" (Sollicitatieclubs)
3. JOB CREATION

I

1. EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

P

1. EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES
2. SELF-PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE
3. PLACEMENT INCENTIVES
4. SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE FOR THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED
5. LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME
6. ADULT EDUCATION (PRODEP)

IRL

1. BACK TO WORK ALLOWANCE
2. RECRUITMENT ASSISTANCE
3. COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME
4. PILOT WHOLE-TIME JOBS OPTION
5. JOBSTART

S

1. RECRUITMENT AID
2. PROGRAMME FOR THE ACQUISITION OF VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

L

See point 3.2.2 Recruitment Aid

UK

1. TRAINING FOR WORK (main training programme for unemployed adults)
2. JOB CLUBS
3. JOB INTERVIEW GUARANTEES
4. RESTART INTERVIEWS
5. JOBPLAN WORKSHOPS
6. RESTART COURSES
7. WORK TRIALS
8. WORKWISE
9. JOBSEARCH PLUS
10. 1-2-1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Special training programs

Specific training programmes for the long-term unemployed are rarer than employment subsidy programmes, also because of the specific difficulties associated with this group. However, the long-term unemployed receive priority under the existing training programmes which form part of active employment policy.

DK

PROVISION OF TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT ACTS
- Procedures:
  + duration: max. 2 year
  + allowance: the education allowance for young insured unemployed people under 25 years is 50% of the unemployment benefits that they would otherwise be entitled to (for insured unemployed persons over 25 years is the same as the unemployed benefit to which the person concerned would otherwise be entitled)
  + training of unemployed person's choice

A

Employment/training combination - specific form of insertion subsidies (gemeinnützige Eingliederungsbeihilfe) This subsidy is currently supporting projects which combine employment with vocational and continuing training, in order to increase participants' prospects of reintegration.

E

Those long-term unemployed enjoy a priority in participating in training measures in the FIP plan.

B

F

D

FIN

The objective of labour market training for adults, financed mainly by the Ministry of Labour, is to help the unemployed find work and to avoid the threat of unemployment. Trainees are selected by the employment agencies. Most courses consist of supplementary training leading to specialisation. Trainees receive a training allowance equal to unemployment benefit.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Special training programs

GR

NL

Framework Regulation for Training (KRS Kaderregeling Scholing)
This regulation provides a national framework by means of which Regional Boards can support and encourage vocational training of unemployed workers and workers whose jobs are under threat and who without training cannot be adapted or maintained in the labour process.

The sector-based statutory contribution scheme for training the unemployed (BBSW 1996) seeks to encourage the training of the registered unemployed by assisting financially the cooperative associations of employers' and workers' organisations in the various industrial sectors at national level by providing subsidies per participant. The Regional Employment Board assesses the training programme and declares its own level of involvement in the training activities.

I

P

Training and employment programmes offer long-term unemployed adults vocational skill training to help them adapt and reintegrate into the labour market.

Special vocational training assistance promotes skill training and social and labour market integration for persons in particularly difficult situations and members of particularly disadvantaged groups.

Employment incentives in connection with conservation of the cultural heritage:
To give long-term unemployed persons aged 25 or over access to the labour market, through vocational training programmes designed to enable them to find steady employment or create their own jobs.

IRL

Second Chance Educational Programme for the long-term unemployed.
This sandwich programme is aimed at people aged 25 or over who have been unemployed for more than a year. Periods of theoretical training alternate with periods of practical training in a work environment. It also includes training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and offers access to all the training programmes managed by the FAS.
In addition to the Second Chance Educational Programme long-term unemployed adults may also be eligible for the Third Level Allowance Scheme, VTOS and to pursue Second Level education whilst retaining their welfare entitlements.

S

L

Extension of training-placement actions targeted at certain groups of jobseekers and on the basis of a partnership between involved actors. These actions have had good results (ie 95% recruitment of candidates who were engineers). Other targeted actions exist to industrial design, are being planned for young university students in the area of natural sciences, and are being considered for other levels of qualifications (eg refrigeration technicians).

UK

Training for Work - The main UK training programme for unemployed adults. Aim is to help long term unemployed people get jobs (including self-employment) though training and/or work experience. The target Group is people unemployed for more than six month and others at a disadvantage in the labour market, for example, people with disabilities and people with a low level of literacy/numeracy skills. Delivery of programmes is local through a network of Training and Enterprise Councils in England and Wales and Local Enterprise Companies in Scotland; training to gain occupational skills and/or National Vocational Qualifications according to individual needs and the needs of the labour market. In 1996/7 more than 200,000 people will benefit.

Training for people with severe disabilities.Target Group is people who would have difficulty training in mainstream Training for Work because of the effects of severe disability. Procedures are training at residential training colleges, which offer specialist support and medical care where needed. Additional funds available from DfEE to TECs to pay for the additional costs of providing customised local training as an alternative to residential provision.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Measures for older workers

There are few active measures for older workers, as priority is given to reducing their demand for work, e.g. through early retirement or partial early retirement (see 2.1.2.6). Measures aimed at the long-term unemployed also cover the older long-term unemployed, who in certain regions account for a large proportion of the total (see also 5.1 et 5.2).

DK

After the abolition of the Transitional Allowance Scheme for the age group 50-59 years, this group of workers now have access to the same activation measures as younger groups of workers.
See 5.1.1

A

1. BONUS/PENALTY SYSTEM IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (Bonus-Malus System)
2. COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Bebtriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)
3. EXTENDED MEASURES

E

Subsidy of 500,000ptas for the recruitment on permanent contract of older workers (>45 years).

Exemption of 50% of social security contributions

B

PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS
See 5.1.1(2)

INSERTION JOBS
See 3.2.2

F

1. CES (Employment and Solidarity Contracts)

2. "DELALANDE" CONTRIBUTION

3. INTERMEDIARY ASSOCIATIONS

4. EMPLOYMENT REPLACEMENT ALLOWANCE (Allocation de Remplacement pour l'Emploi)

D

1. WAGE SUBSIDIES FOR OLDER WORKERS

FIN

In general, long-term unemployment particularly affects older workers. More than half of unemployed over-55s are classified as long-term unemployed. The active population over the age of 45 is a risk group, as their level of training is lower and their vocational training out of date. Employment agencies deal with each case individually. The larger employment offices conduct assessments of working capacity and rehabilitation needs.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Measures for older workers

GR

- special subisdies to enterprises for the recruitment of older workers
- allowances to long-term unemployed older workers in case of sickness

NL

1. Employment protection

I

P

INDIVIDUAL MONITORING PLANS
- Target group: persons over 45 who have been unemployed for nine months
- Procedure: personalised support

RECRUITMENT AND BUSINESS START-UP ASSISTANCE
- Target group: long-term unemployed persons over 45
- Procedures: recruitment subsidy or business start-up grant (increase of 20%).

EARLY RETIREMENT FOR OLDER WORKERS ON UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT (see 2.1.1.5).
- Allows older workers on unemployment benefit to apply for a retirement pension at the age of 60.

REDUCTION IN SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS from 11% to 9.5% for workers receiving an invalidity or retirement pension.

IN-COMPANY TRAINING INCENTIVE : exemption from training costs for workers over 45, in companies participating in training and employment programmes.

IRL

The Community Employment programme is now split into two distinct options,
- Part Time Integration Option
- Part Time Job Option

The Part Time Job Option, introduced in the 1996 Budget, specifically targets the long-term unemployed over 35 years of age. A target of 10,000 places for this option will be phased in by the end of 1997.

S

Employers who recruit unemployed persons over 60 in a specific region may be entitled to wage subsidies of up to 50% of wage costs.

L

See point 3.2.2 Recruitment Aid

UK

The campaign for Older Workers raises awareness of older workers; persuades employers to recruit, retrain and retain workers on merit; and encourages older workers to remain in the labour market. The Campaign message is disseminated through publications, regional presentations, conferences and seminars. An Advisory Group on Older Workers advises the Minister on best employment practice.

5

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Equal pay and equal treatment (1. Legislation 2. Collective agreements)

1. Most countries rely on national regulations to implement the principle of equal treatment.
2. In some countries collective agreements are required to implement the principle of equal treatment, but few specific measures are evident. Decentralisation of collective bargaining has raised concerns that women are often employed in less well organised firms and occupations, and may be less able to benefit from the more local based bargaining. Job evaluation has only been applied in a limited number of countries, and only a few sectors, as a means of reducing sex segregation. The need to remove sexist terminology in job classifications and to use the same criteria for assessing male and female jobs has been reconsidered in recent measures in Portugal and Spain respectively.

A

1. Direct or indirect discrimination in the field of equal pay or equal access, promotion or other working conditions, as well as sexual harassment, are forbidden, in private law, by § 2 of the 13th. Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (Equal Treatment Law). Compensation can be claimed on the basis of § 2 a of that same law. A special law exists for farm workers. Federal civil servants, employees and workers have similar - sometimes more far-reaching - rights under the Bundesgleichbehandlungsgesetz that was changed, in view of Austrian accession to the EU, in 1994. Comparable legislation exists for the regional (Länder) public services.

B

1. Equality in law is guaranteed by the Constitution - Articles 10 and 11. The right to equal pay is contained and defined in Labour Collective Agreement No 25 of 15.10.1975 and covers both equal work and work of equal value. The right to equal treatment is laid down in the Law of Economic Reorientation of 4.8.1978 and covers direct and indirect discrimination as well as positive action.
2. Collective Employment Agreement n° 25, made compulsory by the royal decree of 9 December 1975, began the process of eliminating any discrimination based on gender in the structure of payment systems and in job evaluation systems. Equality of remuneration must be implemented at the point at which pay is determined. All collective agreements including those on job definition and evaluation must also conform to this principle. In addition, the law of 4 august 1978 makes its compulsory for employers to ensure equality of treatment between men and women in respect of working conditions.

D

1. The principle of equal pay and equal treatment at the workplace is implemented in German civil law, covering all private work contracts, in § 611 a Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch (Civil Code). According to § 1, inequality is forbidden unless justified by special reasons that are gender-neutral. The burden of proof shifts to the employer, once an evidential difference is proved by the employee. Compensation for illegal discrimination in access to and promotion at work is foreseen in § 2. No measures by the Federal Government, as wage policy is regarded by the employers and trade unions.

DK

1. The right to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value is contained in the Act on Remuneration for Men and Women (1976) - consolidated in 1992. Equal treatment is assured under the Act on Equal Treatment of Men and Women regarding Employment and Maternity Leave (1989) prohibits direct or indirect differences in treatment, especially on the basis of pregnancy, matrimonial or family circumstances.
2. Equal pay for work of equal value is stated in all collective agreements. Since 1985 most collective agreements have been negotiated at the local level and this has increased the variation in wage agreements. Female dominated job categories often do not receive the bonuses and supplementary wages to the same extent as the male dominated job categories. The 1995 collective agreements have opened up opportunities for significantly greater flexibility in work time arrangements and this may increase the gender wage gap even more as women are often less able to work overtime.

E

1. Article 25 of the Workers' Statute sets out the obligation for equal pay for work of equal value, without discrimination based on pay; Article 96 defines as a major infraction employer discrimination in matters of remuneration based on sex. Law 7/1989 puts into law the principle of the transfer of the burden of proof in cases where a worker claims discrimination on grounds of sex. The second Equality Opportunities Action Plan (1993-95) was approved in January 1993. It includes provisions for equal pay for work of equal value.
2. The new article 22 of the Workers' Statute regulates the classification of jobs, based on the variety of functions, levels of remuneration and job categories, by creating the concept of equivalent categories and leaving certain freedom for collective negotiation. Criteria for classifying workers in groups and categories must be based on the rules of common law applicable to male and female workers, while ensuring non-discrimination on the grounds of sex.

F

1. The law prohibits any discrimination against women in the exercise of their work or in recruitment (Law no 83-635 of 13/7/83 and Decree No 84-395 of 25/5/84) as well as in remuneration arrangements (Law no 72-1143 of 22/17/72 and Decree No 73-360 of 27/3/73). Persons found guilty of such discrimination may be fined or imprisoned.

FIN

1. The Finnish Equality Act of 1986 was amended, on 1st March 1995, in view of accession to the European Union. Besides the prohibition of direct and indirect discrimination and of discriminatory advertising (Sections 7 and 8) and a provision on compensation (Sections 11 and 12), the duty of both authorities and employers to promote equality and the obligation of the employer to report on his/her procedure have been reinforced (Sections 4, 6 and 10).
2. The central labour market organisations set up a joint working group in May 1990 to investigate ways of evaluating work and developing these, particularly with a view to fields and jobs dominated by women. The working group presented its final report in February 1994. It proposed that the job demands should be the main criterion for setting wages. Now there is a process to create a job evaluation system in various branches. If a collective agreement is in contradiction with the Equality Act the court can prohibit the implementation of the discriminatory agreement.

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Equal pay and equal treatment (1. Legislation 2. Collective agreements)

GR

2. The national general collective agreement promotes the application of the principle of sex equality in particular with respect to employment, remuneration and professional training. A bipartite Commission for monitoring the application of sex equality legislation has also been created. The law for collective bargaining 1876/1990 extended all collective bargaining to cover all employees under private contracts working in the private or the public sector. The 1990 law established five levels of bargaining and five kinds of collective agreements , ; the national general agreements, the sectoral agreements, the national occupational agreements, the regional occupational agreements and the company agreements. This greater regulation of employment will establish more protection, from which women will benefit. Measures about job evaluation have not been taken. Job evaluation schemes exist only at the company level exist in enterprises which have adopted merit payment systems.

NL

1. The Equal Treatment Act of 1/3/80 prohibits direct or indirect discrimination of men and women. The law applies also to employment, equal pay, recruitment and selection, working conditions, retirement etc. Positive action for women is still possible in the case of underrepresentation of women in certain functions or occupations. A new law on improving the legal position of part-time work workers is intended that the will come into force in the second half of 1996.
2. The policy is to give social partners more scope to shape employment relations. This means that regulations about payments and working hours tend to be seen as matters which should be determined through decentralised consultation by the parties concerned, and not by compulsory legal legislation.

I

1. Equal Pay in Italy is enshrined in the Equal Treatment between Male and Female Workers Act 903/1977. By its enactment, directives 75/117/EEC on equal pay and 76/207/EEC on equal treatment have been transposed into national legislation. No specific measures have been introduced. The 125/1991 law does not include any specific policy measures, but simply promotes "positive actions" (through public funding) to favour the employment of women and the acquisition of substantial equality between men and women at work.

P

1. The Portuguese Constitution (1976) contains guarantees of equality, notably Article 59.1 which provides for equal pay for equal work. Decree N° 392/79 (20.9.1979) applies the principles of equal pay and equal treatment. The 1979 law defines the concept of pay (Art. 2) and provides for equal pay for equal work or work of equal value (Art 9). Collective agreements which infringe the principle shall be invalid (Article 12). The right to equality of treatment is contained in Decree 392/79. The notion of discrimination is defined in Article 2.
2. A new National Classification of Occupations (CNP) had just been published. Social partners in the Economic and Social Council decided to avoid the use of sexual terminology in the new occupational definitions and labels.

IRL

1. The right to equal pay is contained in the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974, which provides that the right is part of every employment contract. The Act provides for special equality officers to investigate disputes. It applies expressly to men also. The right to equal treatment is laid down in the Employment Equality Act 1977. The Act applies to employment, the professions and vocational training. It forbids discriminatory job advertisements.
2. The Employment Equality Agency and the Report of 2nd Commission on the Status of Women have proposed an amending statute which would allow for (a) "hypothetical" male rather than an actual male comparitor to be used in equal pay claims, (b) stronger powers of enforcement, (c) "indirect discrimination" to be used in questions of pay and (d) review of job classification and evaluation systems.

S

1. In 1980 the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA) entered into force. The Act promotes equality between women and men with respect to employment, conditions of employment and opportunities for development at work. A revised Act was adopted in 1991. The new Act contains 2 parts : ban on discrimination (pay, etc.) and rules obliging employers to work actively for equality at the work place (including preparing an annual plan for equality). In 1994, the new Act was amended to strenghten the provision on equal pay.
2. Each year an employer who employs ten or more employees is required to make a survey of pay differentials between women and men at the workplace. The survey have to include an annual plan of action which the employer must draw up and submit to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman on request. Most employers carry out a survey and produce a plan. It is stipulated that the survey must include analysis of different types of work and for different categories of employees. The central and local collective agreements include criteria for wage setting and divisions into different wage groups.

L

1. Law on the reform of the minimal social salary (1973) as amended in 1976, 1982 and 1986 - no social group is excluded. Law on the pay system for State Officials (1963) - for identical services, the salary of a female official is equal to that of a male official. Regulation on equal remuneration between men and women (1974) - all employers are required to provide equal pay for work of equal value. Equal treatment is enshrined in the 8 Dec 1981 Law on equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (1981), as amended in 1986. The law on collective agreements (1965) requires that collective agreements should contain provisions for implementing the principle of equal pay on a non-discriminatory basis.

UK

1. In British law, the right to equal pay is laid down in the 1970 Equal Pay Act (as amended). In Northern Ireland, it is the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 which applies. The Act implies an equality clause into employment contracts and applies to situations of like work, work rated as equivalent and work of equal value (s.1.2). The right to equal pay does not arise where there is a genuinely material difference in the work (s.1.3). The right to equal treatment is laid down in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended). Section 1 defines discrimination. Section 2 applies this definition to men as well. Discrimination on grounds of marital status is forbidden (s.3). Discrimination is forbidden as regards access to employment or working conditions generally such as transfer, promotion or training (s.6). An exception is made for jobs where sex is a genuine occupational qualification (s.7). The Act provides for the creation of the Equal Opportunities Commission (Part IV) and defines its powers: research and education, codes of practice, formal investigations, issuing non-discrimination notices, assisting claimants.

5

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Equality audits

An equality audit is a process of evaluation undertaken by organisations in order to assess how far their internal employment policies, structures and practices have progresses towards gender equality. The audits take place on a regular basis, for example, annually and the employment issues covered by the process may vary from country to country and from establishment to establishment. It usually covers the comparative number of men and women employed in total, by grade and salary and hours of work. The audit may also - particularly over a period of time - cover other areas, such as terms and conditions of employment, recruitment and promotion rates, access to training and the take up of measures to facilitate the reconciliation of working and family life etc. Specific legal requirements to carry out audits exist in three member states (Belgium, France and Italy). In other member states, however, there are examples of governments and/or equality bodies which actively encourage organisations to draw up equality plans.

A

B

Royal Decree of 12.08.93 requires all enterprises to produce an annual report to present to the works council, or failing that, the trade union delegation. This report must give a general outline of employment conditions, work arrangements, functions, and training for men and women in the enterprise, but also an analysis and evaluation for each work category for men and women in the enterprise, and in particular the conditions of recruitment and training, promotion and qualification opportunities, as well as working and pay conditions. The public sector is required to produce an analysis report according to the Royal Decree regarding positive actions.

D

Women are given support within the framework of existing labour market instruments in proportion to their number amongst the unemployed. The state promotes the realisation of equal opportunities and removes existing disadvantages. Most of the "Länder" of the German Federal Republic have introduced an Equal Opportunity Law for the public sector (measures : women promotion plan, person responsible for women affairs ; issues : recruitment, leave, part-time, career break, sexual harassment etc.)
Equal opportunities laws or statutory positive actions for the private sector do not exist.
In many sectors collective agreements exist including measures to promote women.

DK

In Denmark, there are no legally binding requirements regarding Equality Audits.
Since 1987, the Equal Status Council has co-ordinated the work of public institutions through the government's plan of action for equal opportunity. In 1991, the Danish Parliament adopted a motivated agenda which sharpens the obligation to draw up annual plans, including target figures and report to the Equal Status Council.
During evaluation in 1993, it was clear that the efforts made by the public institutions were unsatisfactory. The Danish Parliament therefore adopted yet another motivated agenda, which enjoins state institutions immediately to draw up plans of action containing target figures for women in managerial positions and the connection between family and working life.
This demand has been followed up by a personal recommendation from the Prime Minister.

E

There is no legal requirement to carry out equality audits in Spain. However, INI-TENEO, a large public group of companies has signed an Agreement with the Instituto de la Mujer to undertake a positive action program. The first step is to study the human resources of the group with special attention to the situation of women, capabilities and training opportunities, and also to analyses the collective agreements signed in all the companies of the Group for aspects of equality of opportunity.

F

See E 2.1 'Positive Actions'.

FIN

See also E 2.1 'Positive Actions'.
When employers are preparing the equality plan they are required to undertake a basic study of the workplace. The audit will include issues such as pay differences between men and women; recruiting practices; distribution of vocational training organised by the employer.

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Equality audits

GR There is no legal requirement to carry out equality audits. However, following the 1993 National Collective Agreement which applies to all workers employed under an employment relationship governed by private law, a bipartite commission, composed of representatives of workers and employers must be set up in order to monitor the application of sex equality legislation and of legislation concerning workers with family responsibilities. To date this commission has not been set up

NL

I

P The law which guarantees equal opportunities and treatment for women in employment (Decreto-Lei n° 392/79 of 20.09.79 and Decreto-Lei n) 426/88 of 18.09.88 (public function)) provides for the existence of a commission (CITE -Commission for Equality in work and employment) with a tripartite composition (Labour Ministry and social partners) is responsible for: advising on equality matters; promoting visits to work places; asking for the inspection of work places to look for the existence of discriminatory practices.

The purpose of this commission is to try to identify, clarify and possibly resolve disputes with resort to judiciary. Thus, in a wide sense, the intervention of the commission can be seen as an 'audit'.

IRL

S

L

UK In the UK a large number of employers in both the public and private sectors have voluntarily committed themselves to improving the gender balance of their workforce at all levels and across job categories. These organisations regularly undertake a process of monitoring in order to assess progress towards this goal. Procedures used for assessing the effectiveness of equal opportunities policies cover: commitment; awareness-raising; information and monitoring; implementation, policy and procedures; reviewing and up-dating. The assessments include issues such as recruitment and promotion, grading and salary; hours of work; training and sexual harassment.

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Positive actions

There is no official definition of 'positive action' at European level. There is, however, widespread agreement across the European Union that the concept of positive action embraces any measure or set of measures, which aim to make up for effects of past discrimination; to eliminate existing discrimination; and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women - particularly in relation to types or levels of jobs, where members of one sex are significantly under-represented. The 1994 Council Recommendation on Positive Action identifies a wide range of measures which should be taken in this context. No Member States makes it compulsory for employers to take positive action in the private sector, and in the majority of Member States there is no legal requirement placed upon the public sector to institute positive action measures. There are only two Member States (B and I) where some form of positive action is mandatory in the public sector by virtue of national law.

A

B

Royal Decree of 14.07.87 regarding measures to promote equality between men and women in the private sector allows companies to adopt positive action plans and details their format. This voluntary legal instrument is part of the structural policy led since 1985, which is based on the axis of sensitising and promotion by means of a groups of experts at the disposal of enterprises, and on consolidation through the creation of a network of enterprises. Most initiatives result from collective agreements. Royal Decree of 27.02.90 on equal opportunities for men and women in the public sector itself is obligatory on federal, provincial and communal administrations. It defines positive actions and specifies the method to be followed. To ensure effective implementation a specific framework is provided by a network of co-ordinators. The Decree was recently modified in order to increase the time available in certain administrations for planning by those responsible.

D

DK

Danish legislation regarding equal opportunities between men and women gives possibilities for dispensation - possibility for positive action - for certain forms of jobs and training. The law is applicable both to the public and the private sector. Activities which come under this provision are as follows :
- advertisements which explicitly declare that female applicants are desired
- training reserved for women ;
- guidance courses for women who are returning to the labour market or to non-traditional career choices. The public sector has provided for activities for more women in managerial positions, developing women's job functions, work organisation to allow family and working life as well as changes in organisation culture.

E

Promoting Positive Actions within public and private companies is an objective of the Second Plan for Equality 1993-95 launched by the Instituto de la Mujer. Four activities are stated : to disseminate information ; to facilitate technical advice for Positive Action Programmes ; to promote changes in the companies' culture in relation to gender stereotypes ; and to train managers to fill the directors' positions. However, there is no legal requirement to undertake a positive action in Spain, in either the public or the private sector.

However, the Instituto de la Mujer (Women's Institute) launched, at national level, a Plan for Equality in 1988-1990 and a Second Plan for Equality 1993-1995. These two Plans were approved by the Government and the national administration had the commitment to introduce its measures, to promote the legal reforms there indicates and to persecute its objectives.

F

The law of 13 July 1983 on professional equality outlines the requirement for businesses to produce a report comparing general conditions of employment for men and women, and the possibility for the social partners to negotiate "equality plans" in businesses which are reserved for the training, recruitment, career development, equality of pay and qualification of female workers. Equality plans usually deal principally with training, but do cover other areas. In France, it has tended to be the management rather than the trade unions which has initiated such positive actions.

In 1987, these measures were extended through the introduction of a contract for equal treatment in employment ('mixité des emplois') which is aimed at businesses with less than 200 employees and seeks to improve recruitment, career change and promotion in jobs which are principally occupied by men or in new technology jobs.

FIN

According to the Equality Act every employer who has at least 30 employees is required to prepare an equality plan. The plan should include measures to improve the equality in the workplace and steps to promote women's equitable recruitment, to improve working conditions and facilitate the reconciliation of working and family life. The equality plan can include measures to decrease pay differences between men and women. It should also include measures to deal with sexual harassment.

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Positive actions

GR There is no legal requirement to undertake positive action but the Act 1414/84 considers that to undertake positive action is not discriminatory.
In October 1992 a legal requirement was introduced requiring at least one woman among the members of any "Conseil de Service". This requirement was abolished in 1994 with the law 2190/94.

NL Positive action for women is possible in the case of underrepresentation of women in certain functions or occupations.

I The Law 125/91 of April 1991 introduced Positive Actions as the major instrument to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market. They are compulsory in the Civil Service (following union consultation) and voluntary in the private sector. Positive Actions can be promoted either unilaterally by companies, co-operatives, consortia, public economic bodies, unions and training centres, or by means of collective agreements between unions and employers. The law provides for total or partial reimbursement of the costs of the initiatives. Priority on financing is given to the projects which have been agreed by means of collective bargaining between unions and employers.

P The law of 20.09.79 (Decreto-Lei n° 392/79) mentions in one of the articles that temporary measures are not considered discriminatory if they give preference on the basis of sex in order to correct inequality, or are designed to protect the social value of maternity.

IRL The Employment Equality Act, 1977 (section 15) provides that a person may provide training for persons of one sex to fit them for a type of work or to take advantage of opportunities for doing that work where it can be shown that during the previous 12 months there were no persons of that sex, or comparatively few doing that work.

S Positive actions are permitted both in the Constitution and in the Equal Opportunities Act. It is an important means in the policy for equality.

L

UK There is no legal requirement within the UK for organisations to undertake positive action. However, three UK equality networks provide the impetus for action in many cases :
- The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) Equality Exchange is a National Forum for practitioners committed to achieving equal opportunities for women in employment.
- The joint Government and EOC Fair Play for Women : Regional Partnerships for Equality initiative facilities a regional approach to identifying the factors preventing women from contributing fully to economic and social life in England.
- Opportunity 2000 is an independent campaign to increase the quality and quantity of women's participation in the workforce. Employers within the campaign have voluntarily committed themselves to increase employment opportunities for women at all levels within their organisations by the end of this century.

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Measures for unemployed women

Several countries have introduced specific measures to help women reintegrate into the labour market, including training programmes, wage cost subsidies, training subsidies for employers, and job creation programmes. In some cases measures are part of an equal opportunities programme, while in others they reflect a more general commitment towards helping risk groups. These specific programmes can only partly compensate for the discrimination against women reflected by the targeting of labour market programmes at the registered unemployed (women are over-represented among the non-registered unemployed) and those who do not receive benefit.

Measures for unemployed women mainly consist of employment and training subsidies. Sometimes childcare is also subsidised (A,B). Finally, there are special programmes to promote the recruitment of (unemployed) women into typically male occupations.

A

1. INNOVATORY VOCATIONAL TRAINING
2. CHILDCARE ALLOWANCE (Kinderbetreuungsbeihilfe)
3. CHILDMINDERS AND CHILDCARE PROJECTS
4. COMPENSATION FOR REINTEGRATION OF A WORKER FOLLOWING PARENTAL LEAVE
5. COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Betriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

B

PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS
See 5.1.1(2)
Under the 1988 framework law, the State set up an employment fund financed by a social security contribution of 0.18% of wage costs imposed on employers. This fund provides financial support for projects designed to help persons with difficulties in finding a job, e.g. women returning to the labour market. The Royal Decrees of 2 February 1989 and 28 May 1991 define the terms "persons returning to the labour market" and "women returning to the labour market". Since 1988, biannual multi-sectoral agreements between employers and trade unions have required a certain percentage of wage costs (ranging from 0.18% in 1988 to 0.25% in 1995-96) to be allocated to projects to improve the situations of the target groups, particularly women returning to the labour market. (See 2.2.2)

D

1. TRAINING AID
2. SPECIAL QUALIFICATION ASSISTANCE (ESF co-financing)
3. CREATION OF APPRENTICESHIPS (Regional: Saxony, ESF co-financing)
4. REGIONAL ADVISORY AGENCIES

DK

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS
See Annex to 5.2.1(1)

Nearly all Danish women with young children continue to work, but although women with children aged up to six are more likely to be involved in the labour market than other groups, they are also more likely to lose their jobs.
Mothers bringing up children alone are more likely to be unemployed than other women, and more than 40% of them are on social assistance (primarily social benefits or unemployment benefit). Women who have been without a job for a long time qualify for retraining or employment programmes introduced during the 1980s. These programmes have benefited from the active reform of the labour market implemented in January 1994.

E

There is one type of regulated employment contract designed to help women reintegrate into the labour market. It is aimed at women over 25 who previously worked and now wish to return to work after being without a job for at least five years. Recruitment of such women is subsidised to the amount of PTA 500 000 per person (Law 22/1992 and Law 10/94).

Subsidy of 500,000ptas for the recruitment on permanent contract of female returners or where women are under-represented in the enterprise.

F

EMPLOYMENT DESEGREGATION CONTRACTS
For individual female employees.
+ Maximum: 50% of teaching costs involved in training.
+ 50% of other costs (fitting out of workstations and/or premises)
+ 30% of wage costs during the training period. Cannot be combined with other State assistance for companies.

SIFE (Integration and employment traineeships)
See 5.2.1(6)

OCCUPATIONAL EQUALITY PLAN
Company collective agreement.
+ All female employees except temporary workers, domestic staff, caretakers and childminders.
+ Maximum: 50% of training costs.
+ 50% of other costs relating to the plan.
+ 30% of wages paid during training.

FIN

The employment agencies treat each case individually. Personalised training programmes may be organised by the employment agencies or training establishments as part of preparatory training for working life. Where women are placed with the help of wage subsidies, an attempt is made to offer them jobs in which the experience acquired will boost their chances of finding permanent employment. A project entitled "Women and in-company vocational training" has been designed to encourage employers to make full use of women's skills.

Cooperation between the labour and education authorities has been intensified in order to fight female unemployment. Regional cooperation networks have been established to provide innovation in the field of employment for women. The emphasis is on the creation of businesses and self-employment.

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Measures for unemployed women

GR

ACCELERATED VOCATIONAL TRAINING
A new accelerated vocational training programme introduced by the Ministry of Labour in December 1994 is aimed specifically at women. 1 080 women will participate in the programme and more than 3 000 have already benefited from the Community initiative NOW. The rate of participation in this programme of women returning to the labour market is not known.

RECONCILIATION BETWEEN FAMILY LIFE AND WORK
Introduction of new childcare schemes and establishing of 20 "creative occupation centres" for children, eight of which are co-financed by the ESF and 12 by the NOW programme.

NL

Support for women who wish to return to work is the responsibility of the Employment Services (Arbeidsvoorziening), which focus their activities on the "Women and Work" centres (information, counselling and support for women returning to work) and training establishments specifically for this category of women.

I

Italy has no specific measures for the reintegration of women into the labour market. However, since the end of 1990 (following ratification of Law n° 407/1990 adopted on 31 December), a coordinated system of employment incentives has operated, to assist the reintegration of disadvantaged groups of workers. The main features of this system are reduced social security contributions and tax credits for firms which recruit additional workers from the specified disadvantaged groups.

See also 4.2.4 and 4.2.6

P

1. VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED WOMEN
2. TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME
3. EXEMPTION FROM VOCATIONAL TRAINING COSTS
4. TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN
5. A LITERACY PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN DEVELOPED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

IRL

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME
Female participation in this general programme (see 5.2.1.0(3)) is fixed at 29%. A new provision also allows recipients of single-parent benefit (mainly women) to benefit from the scheme. In 1993, 31% of participants were women.

TRAINING
In 1990, the FAS introduced a system of reserved places for women on specific training courses. The aim was to reduce segregation on the labour market. Preparatory training for non-traditional occupations has also been introduced.

S

Swedish labour market policy has always focused on those who are either already unemployed or in danger of losing their jobs, with completely equal treatment for both sexes. Each regional labour market office has two persons responsible for implementation of training programmes with due regard for the principle of equality in all respects.
The parental leave scheme means that most women do not stop working after they have a child. However, they work fewer hours when they return to work, which parents are entitled to do as long as their child is under seven.There are no special measures for persons wishing to return to work at the end of this period.
Assistance is available for women wishing to start a business, including a national help network, special loans for rural areas, and support during a six-month preparatory period. Around 30% of persons setting up new businesses are women.

L

Since the early 1990s, the "Initiativ Rem Schaffen" non-profit organisation has been offering guidance, advice and assistance to women who want to return to work, particularly those who have difficulties in finding a job.

The NAXI-ATELIER project, in conjunction with NOW, provides women (often long-term unemployed) with an opportunity to acquire the experience and basic training they need in order to achieve reintegration.

There are also other specific training actions for women returners, and information and consultation services. Luxembourg also has a Ministry for the promotion of women and a quadripartite committee on women's work.

UK

The UK's diverse and flexible working patterns provide women with options to find a job that suits their particular circumstances. The UK is committed to extending the opportunities for women across a broad spectrum, affording them the opportunity to progress at all levels of the career ladder and in public life. Fair Play for Women, launched in April 1994, builds on the success of New Horizons and aims to help women realise their full capabilities so they can make their full contribution to the local economy and the local community. Ten regional partnerships have been established - one in each of the regions covered by integrated regional Government Offices. Consortia models and membership vary and they are free to set their own agenda for action based on local priorities.

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Childcare services (system, provisions)

DK

Publicly funded services for children under 7 years are mainly provided within one integrated system, within the welfare system. The Ministry of Social Affairs has responsibility at national level, with local authorities (communes) responsible at local level. There are several types of centre and organised family day care. These services are available throughout the year and on a full-day basis.

Publicly funded services providing care and education for school-age children are mainly provided in centres. Some of these centres also take younger children not attending school, but most children now use school-based centres mainly run by the education system.

Private, unsubsidised services are not common and consist mainly of family day care; there are no private, unsubsidised centres.

A

Family day care exists in four different forms. The carers can be: employed by a private organisation; self-employed, but affiliated to an organisation; self-employed, with approval from her local authority; or working illegally, without this approval.

In order to promote more family day care the regional government funds half of the salary costs of newly employed carers during the first 3 years.

E

Publicly funded services are mainly provided within one integrated system, which is the responsibility of the Education Ministries of the six autonomous communities (ACs). All publicly-funded services for children under 3 years is provided in centres. These services are generally available throughout the year and on a full day basis. Most provision for children aged 3 to 5 years is in schools. Most schools are managed by public authorities, mainly by MEC an ACs. but with a few run by local authorities, but some schools are privately run but receive a public subsidy. Publicly funded services for children outside school hours is uncommon, although there is increasing provision of play schemes during the long summer holidays, mostly for children over 6 years.

B

There are two systems of Publicly funded services for children under 6 years: welfare and education.

Three autonomous communities, responsible for services for young children, operate at community level in Belgium, with both privately and local authority administered agencies running family day care schemes. Both private organisations and local authorities, are subsidised by the community and subsidies cover administrative costs and payments to carers.

Within the education system, pre-primary schooling is provided for children from 2.5 years until compulsory school age. This service is the responsibility of Education Ministries at the Community level. It is available during term-time and for the same hours as primary school. Private unsubsidised services are provided in centres and by family day carers. These services are indirectly subsidised through tax relief for parent's costs.

F

Compulsory schooling starts at the age of 6 years. There are two systems of publicly funded services for children under 6 years - welfare and education, these systems overlap for children aged 24-26 months.

Within the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health and Towns at national level and of local authorities (communes) at local level. The services are available throughout most of the year and on a full day basis. Two thirds of publicly-funded services are managed by local authorities, the remainder by private organisations.

Within the education system, pre-primary schooling is provided for children from 2 years to compulsory school age. This service is the responsibility of the national Ministry of Education. It is available during term-time and for the same hours as primary school.

D

Publicly funded services for children under 6.5 years are usually in the welfare system and are, the responsibility of : the Ministry for Family, the Aged, Women and Youth at Federal level and Social Ministries in the Länder.

Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school-age children (i.e. from 6.5 years) are mainly provided in centres, separate from schools, some of which are age-integrated. These centres are usually managed by local authorities.

Private unsubsidised services are mainly provided by family day carers. There is a subsidy for low income families using family day carers and other private services approved by public authorities.

FIN

Most family day care is provided in organised schemes by carers employed by local authorities. There are also some independent, self-employed carers approved by local authorities. Family day care is mostly used for children under 3 years, but is also common for children from 3 to 6 years and for out-of-school care. Statistics in 1992 show that Finland had a small surplus of child care places, mainly because of growing unemployment of all public child care services.

Most of the costs of organised family day care schemes are funded by national and local government (each pays 42% of costs).

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Childcare services (system, provisions)

GR

Compulsory schooling starts at the age of 5.5 years, but this will increase to 6 years in September 1995. Below that age, there are two systems of publicly funded services - welfare and education; these systems overlap for children aged 4.5-5.5 years. Within the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Welfare, which also manages most of these services; the remaining services are managed by local authorities and private organisations.
Within the education system, pre-primary schooling is provided for children from 3.5 years to compulsory school age. This service is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. It is available during term-time, for a few hours each morning.
Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school-age children are very uncommon; The Ministry of Education has announced that from September 1995 it will support provision in a few nursery and primary schools.

NL

There are two systems of publicly funded services for children under 5 - welfare and education. Within the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and local authorities. There are several types of centre; these centres are generally available throughout the year. In addition, there are local publicly funded offices which help to organise the relationship between family day carers and parents wanting to use this service, but which do not employ themselves cares. Children aged 4 years can be admitted early to primary school. Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school-age children are provided in centres which are independent of schools and some of which also take younger children not attending school. All these services are publicly-funded and managed by private organisations.

I

There are two main types of publicly funded services for children under 6 years. Services for children under 3 years are mainly provided in centres. These are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, and therefore part of the welfare system at national level.

Within the education system, pre-primary schooling is provided as part of the education system.

Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school-age children can take various forms including school-based services and centres separate from school School-based services are generally not staffed by teachers, although some pilot projects involving teachers working extended hours are now taking place in primary schools. They are generally managed by local authorities and are mostly found in larger towns.

P

There are two systems of publicly funded services for children under 6 years - welfare and education. These two systems overlap for children aged 36-72 months.

Within the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security at national level. There are several types of centre and organised family day care. These services are available throughout the year and on a full day basis.

Publicly funded services providing care and education for school-age children are mainly provided in centres.

One of the current priorities of the Ministry of Education concerns the qualifications for access to pre-school education.

IRL

Compulsory schooling starts at the age of 6 years. There are two systems of publicly funded services for children under 6 years - welfare and education; these systems overlap for children aged 3-5 years. Within the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the Department of Health and there are two types of centre. Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school-age children are uncommon; where found, they are usually provided in nurseries and community playgroups which have extended their service to take some school-age children. Private unsubsidised services are provided by family day carers and in centres. Public funding is provided to prime start childcare facilities in areas of social and economic disadvantage.

S

Almost all carers are employed by their local authorities, but recently it has become possible for self-employed carers to get public funding if they set up their own business. It is up to each local authority to decide whether to permit this arrangement and, if so, under what conditions. So far, only a few carers have set up their own business, but there is growing interest in this.

In general, the costs of organised family day care have been divided between the state, the local authorities and the parents so that the state paid 50% of the costs, the local authorities 35% and the parents 15%. In 1993 the whole system of funding was changed. Now the local authorities receive a lump sum for all costs to use as they want, with no money especially marked for family day care (or any other services for young children) and with no conditions. In most communes, the parents' payment is income-related and a contribution to general costs.

L

Publicly funded services for children under 4 years are provided in the welfare system, where they are the responsibility of the Ministry of Family and Solidarity at national level. There is also a small amount of organised family day care. These services are available throughout the year and on a full day basis.

Most publicly funded services are provided by private organisations, who make agreements with the Ministry of Family and Solidarity, but some provision is also made by local authorities.

Publicly funded services providing care and recreation for school age children are provided in centres which are usually independent of schools and most of which also take younger children not attending school(see above).

UK

There is a range of services - both publicly and privately funded - providing day care or education for young children. These systems overlap for children aged 36 to 60 months. In the welfare system, services are the responsibility of the English Department of Health and the welfare sections of the Northern Ireland, Scottish and Welsh Offices at national level, with local authorities responsible at local level (except in Northern Ireland). Within the welfare system, there are several types of centre and a small number of family day carers. Pre-school education, for children aged mainly 3 to 5 years, is provided in publicly funded nursery schools and classes attached to primary schools, in private nurseries and nursery schools and in voluntary playgroups. From April 1997, parents of 4 year olds will be entitled to Government vouchers worth up to £1,100 which they can exchange for three terms of good-quality nursery education in these settings. A central Government initiative is creating nearly 80,000 additional childcare places for school age children over the 6 years to March 1999.

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148

Individualisation of rights in 1. tax and 2. social protection systems

1. In many EU states there is still a higher effective tax rate for the second income earner than for the first or highest income earner. Only a minority of member states have moved to fully individualised tax systems and little progress has been made towards individualisation of recent years.
2. Under most systems women have the same rights in principle to receive unemployment benefits as men but in practice they may face more difficulty in acquiring rights, if they have more interrupted careers or work on contracts where rights are not accumulated. Also some member states may be reducing the length of entitlements to unemployment benefits, thus shortening the time period before household circumstances may affect access to benefits. There has been some progress towards improving women's pension rights in a number of member states. Not all changes have been advantageous to women; lengthening of contribution requirements for pensions may adversely affect women for example if they have interrupted careers. In some states, however, differences in retirement ages have still been maintained in favour of women

DK

1. Wage income and other sources of income are taxed separately for individuals.
2. The same principle applies in the provision of the most important income-compensating benefits. It is only some welfare benefits which are means-tested against family income, these are restricted to families with very low income and concern mainly families with only one income earner and lone parents, i.e. lone mothers living without regular wage income.
In the labour force 75% of men and 80% of women are covered by unemployment benefits. All employees and self-employed aged 18-65 are eligible to become members of an UI-fund and they are eligible for unemployment benefits after one year of membership and if they have worked 26 weeks (52 from 1 January 1997) during a period of 3 years. The number of years requested to be member of an UI-fund have been increased several times during the 1980s but more women are now able to meet these conditions.

A

E

1. Married couples may opt for either joint or individual tax declarations. Under current tax rules a joint tax declaration may be more advantageous than individual declarations for low income households or when one spouse has a much higher income level than the other. These advantages are not available, however, to unmarried couples. Also in the case of single parent families no joint declaration is possible for the parents.
2. The system of unemployment insurance guarantees payments to substitute earned income for workers who find themselves legally unemployed (partially or totally), as well as a minimum level of subsistence by means of unemployment benefit. There is no discrimination between men and women. The proportion of women amongst all recipients of unemployment benefit is around 40% (the female activity rate is 36.4%).

B

1. In Belgium, personal taxation is implemented through a progressive tax levied on individual incomes. The unit of taxation is the household; however, the law of 7 December 1988 introduced two changes into the system :
- Separate taxation: households with two earned incomes benefit from separate taxation, but only in respect of earned income.
- The family or household quotient: 30% of the income earned by one partner is allocated to the non-working spouse.
2. The Belgian social security system is an insurance-based system financed largely by contributions made by individual workers and employers. The problems and discrimination arise out of the existence, alongside each other, of personal and derived entitlements. The only effective solution to this problem would be to individualise entitlement to social security benefits, i.e. to remove any reference to family relationships from decisions on benefit entitlements. However, such a move is not on the agenda.

F

D

1. There have been no steps towards individualisation proposed by the Federal Government although there is a far-reaching tax-reform proposed. The tax splitting system for married couples which results in a high effective tax rate for married women remains untouched.
2. Unemployment benefits are paid in the framework of state social protection in order to ensure a living income.

FIN

1. In 1976 Finland adopted an individualised tax system. Since 1993 both waged income and capital income are taxed separately for individuals. Business income is divided between the spouses if both are working in the enterprise. Most of the tax allowances are also individual. Nonetheless it is possible to choose which of the spouses uses the pension premium allowance (eläkevakuutusmaksuv. In 1995 childcare and child allowances were removed from the tax system. Only wealth is taxed jointly for married couples.
2. Unemployment benefits comprise two elements: a basic allowance which is the same for all, adjusted to take account of the number of children and the spouse's income; and an earnings-related allowance with child supplement. Means-tested income support is family and not individual related.
There are two types of pensions: the state available to all and the employment pension. The employment pension depends on working history and salary.

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Individualisation of rights in 1. tax and 2. social protection systems

GR

1. There is separate taxation, but spouses submit a common tax return. There is an additional tax reduction of 10% for a spouse and there are tax reductions for children ranging from 15% to 55%. These are set against man's income unless he is unemployed.
2. Law 2084/92 introduced equal treatment for the two sexes in terms of retirement age. For the women insured after 1.1.93, the normal retirement age changed from 60 to 65 years. At the same time, the right of both men and women in the private or public sector to an anticipated retirement pension, after 35 years of work was abolished. Women with young or disabled children are entitled to pensions at 55 and to reduced pensions at 50, with a minimum period of insurance of 20 years.

NL

There is separate taxation, but any unused part of the individual tax allowance can be transferred and set against the income of a spouse or cohabiting partner. Thus the total deduction per household is independent of the number of wage earners. This systems means that a second earner levy operates if the second earner's wage absorbs all the basic allowance. In this situation the "breadwinner" can no longer take advantage of the transferred basis allowance and is thus confronted with a higher tax bill. The greater the discrepancy in marginal tax rates faced by the two partners, the higher the levy. Full individualisation of the taxation system has been a subject of discussion for some time. It was the subject of a private members bill in 1993, but at the time of goign to press the bill had been deferred.

I

1. Income tax is individually based. There is a tax deduction for a dependent partner (i.e. , one who has a low taxable income), which is also given to single parents. Each spouse receives a deduction for dependent children, and when one spouse is dependent (i.e. low taxable income) then the other spouse receives a double deduction. Single parents receive a double deduction for dependent children.
2. Unemployed women are more likely to have been employed in service oriented sectors with resultant lower benefits than men, or to be seeking first jobs or returning after a period of inactivity, where no benefits are payable.
Recent measures have raised the retirement age for both men and women, but the difference in retirement ages has been retained. Men will retire at 65 instead of 61 and women at 60 instead of 56.

P

1. In the Portuguese fiscal system the assessment unit is the family and the method of calculation of taxable income is the aggregation of all the incomes which make up the household. Such aggregation is optional. The effect of this taxation system is to increase the effective tax rate on the second earner.
2. Under the Portuguese social security system the right to unemployment benefit and pensions is the same for men and women, whether they are married or not (except for the survivor pension). This pension is paid to the spouse, ex-spouse or the person cohabiting with the beneficiary. It is a condition of entitlement to have been married for at least one year except in cases of death caused by accident or by disease caught after the marriage or in case of entitlement to alimony (ex-spouse).

IRL

1. Since 1980 Joint Assessment of the income of married couples has been automatic unless either spouse requests otherwise. Joint Assessment is based on allocating double tax allowances and double tax bands to a married couple, which are then attributed to the highest earner. Married couples may opt for separate assessment or single assessment. Cohabiting persons are not entitled to transfer tax allowances.
2. For unemployment payments married women or women cohabiting with husbands/partners not in paid employment, are categorised as dependants. An adult dependant allowance (0.6 adult claimant payment) is paid on her behalf to her husband/partner. The adult woman receives no direct payment. Married women homemakers are only eligible for a contributory pension through their husband's entitlements.

S

1. Separate taxation system was introduced in 1971. Married women and men are thereby taxed separately.
2. Unemployment insurance is voluntary and administered by unemployment insurance funds linked to the trade unions. The national supplementary pension ATP and the negotiated pensions are based on paid work and the male bread winner norm and no pension rights are given for household work. Low paid women who have been working part-time during periods of their working life are those who get the least out of both ATP and the negotiated pension systems. Proposals are being discussed for reform which may include taking into account the whole life-cycle income and suggestions have been made how to complement the income of a parent with young children. A proposal has also been made to make it possible for the spouses to share the pension between them.

L

1. There is a family quotient system of tax splitting, which means that the tax is shared by the couple irrespective of the salary breakdown. This produces a higher effective tax rate for married women.
2. The employment insurance system is still based on the principle of household aggregation : the benefit received may be up to 80% of gross salary, depending on the partner's income (and with a ceiling of 2.5 times the minimum legal salary). A further 5 % of gross salary is payable when there are dependent children, and when both spouses claim unemployment this extra addition is paid to the elder one (usually the man).

UK

1. Separate taxation for husbands and wives is now universally applied (previously couples were able to opt to be taxed separately). An additional tax allowance is granted to married couples. Couples can choose who holds the allowance or whether to split the allowance equally.
2. Proposed changes to the unemployment benefit system from October 1996 will half the time over which individuals can claim insurance based benefit on grounds of unemployment although income-based benefits are available without a time-limit. Basic state pensions are based upon years of national insurance contributions; men and women with caring responsibilities at home, may have their basic state pension protected under the Home Responsibilities Protection (HRP) scheme: those who earn below the minimum earnings limit and do not qualify for HRP, can pay voluntary contributions to protect their basic state pension. Recently the government brought in legislation to equalise the pension ages of men and women at age 65 from 2020.

5

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Recent measures

DK

A

Special scheme for the long-term unemployed.
Wage-cost subsidy equivalent to 20% of gross pay for persons who have been registered unemployed for 12 months or more.
Duration: 12 months maximum. The scheme will run for a limited period from 1 March to 30 August 1996.

E

B

F

The Decree of 22 May 1996 extended the employment initiative contract scheme to certain poorly-qualified young persons in difficulties. There are no minimum requirements concerning duration of registration as unemployed.

D

FIN

A Government proposal has been given to Parliament (May 1996) addressing the so called 'income-traps'. The aim is to make employment always the most attractive alternative.

Employment exchange cooperation with some universities and the public employment offices is tried out.

Some employment offices are trying out hiring of labour.

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Recent measures

GR

Consideration is being given to the implementation of training programmes between factories (ELPEKE, EKLA), and the creation of further unemployment programmes.

NL

Activities to help persons on social assistance
- date of entry into force: 1.1.96
- objective: to give people who are not eligible for assistance under other labour market schemes the chance to exercise an activity without losing their social benefits.

Household services
- date of entry into force: 1.1.96
- objective: to combat undeclared work
- procedures: various options are being studied; most involve a substantial reduction in labour costs for firms offering household services.

New employment opportunities: pilot projects for the reintegration of long-term unemployed persons; to be proposed by the various organisations.

WBEAA: Law to promote the participation of ethnic minorities. Proportional participation on labour market and the reduction of problems in the career are the aim of this law.

I

P

Regulation on specialised technology courses corresponding to post-secondary non-higher training (Portaria n° 1227/95 of 10/10).
- Work experience
Alternative curricula comprising a technical element (see 5.1.2)
- PROGRAMME OF IMMEDIATE ACTION ON JOBS
The programme seeks to simulate job creation, actively promote entry and re-entry into the labour market, support the modernisation of management in companies with the aim of preventing employment problems and to pursue strategic joint consultations with a view to enhancing skill levels and employment.

IRL

The following measures were introduced in 1996 following the government budget.

JOBSTART. This will increase the proportion of jobs in the economy filled by the long-term unemployed. Such persons are normally bypassed in job selection. A subsidy of £80 per week is paid to the employer in respect of 52 continuous weeks of employment. Such workers thus employed may retain eligibility for secondary benefits depending on earnings. The target number is 5,000 participants.
COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT. The existing initiative was enhanced to cater for long-term unemployed with reasonable employment prospects and for those with poor employment prospects by offering two options, Part Time Integration Option for the former (30,000 target) and Part Time Job Option for the latter (10,000 target).
PILOT WHOLE TIME JOBS OPTION. Will provide full time work for 1,000 people for three years with local "not for profit" sponsors. The participants will be long-term unemployed for whom access to the labour market is extremely limited for the forseeable future.

S

L

UK

5

Integration into the job market

A

1 COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AND THE PLACEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION SERVICE

- Objective: to provide career advice in schools for young people likely to start work the following year.
- Procedures: vocational guidance training for teachers.

2 VOCATIONAL INFORMATION CENTRES (BERUFSINFORMATIONSZENTREN)

These centres represent a rich source of information for anyone who has to make a decision regarding career or training. The 42 centres open at the moment also organise student information campaigns, information events on specific occupations, special consultation sessions for girls, etc.

3 VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE COURSES (BERUFSORIENTIERUNGSKURSEN)

These subsidised courses, the objective of which is to organise the subsequent careers of participants, are also open to young people with employment problems. In-company practical traineeships represent an important aspect of courses.

B

1 TRAINEESHIPS AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION

- Target group: young people under 30 without experience
- Procedures:
  a) one-year fixed-term contract: remuneration equal to 90% of normal wage
  b) open-ended contract: 10% reduction in employer's social contributions during the second year.

2 PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS

Allocation equal to 0.15% of the wage bill (0.2% in 1996) for the development of integration initiatives (through a collective agreement) to help risk groups and persons covered by the monitoring plan for the unemployed.

3 INTEGRATION CONTRACTS ("stepping stone" jobs) (Global plan)

- Objective: targeted recruitment
- Target group: job seekers under 30 (period of employment not exceeding 6 months)
- Procedures
  + duration: 1 year
  + employee: remuneration equal to at least 90% of that of a worker performing comparable duties in the same undertaking; trainee status
  + employer: shorter periods of notice (for 3 years)
  10% reduction in social contributions

4 BRUSSELS REGION - VOCATIONAL TRANSITION GRANT

- Target group: unemployed people under 26 without an upper secondary school leaving certificate
- Procedures:
  + duration: 1 year
  + employer: monthly grant of BFR 10 000 (20 000 in the event of a full-time open-ended contract combined with in-company training)

5 WALLONIAN REGION - MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN

- Objective: job creation
- Target group: under-25s who have been unemployed for longer than the regional average;
- Procedures
  + duration: max. 3 years
  + worker: fixed-term contract in the local services field (public cleansing service, socio-cultural or sporting activities, heritage department, childcare)
  + employer: wage subsidy of BFR 689 000 per year per employee paid by the Wallonian Region and energy distribution companies
  + condition: the employer must be a local authority.

6 INITIAL WORK EXPERIENCE CONTRACTS

Initial work experience contracts (contrats de première expérience professionnelle - PEP) are offered to young people under 30 who have been looking for work for 9 months.
In the private sector, PEP contracts take the form of 6-month traineeship contracts (part- or full-time). Half of all existing traineeship arrangements are provided by PEP contracts. Rules applying to traineeship contracts also cover PEP contracts.
A young person taking up work under a full-time PEP contract is entitled to payment equivalent to at least 90% of the salary drawn by a worker carrying out the same functions in accordance with the wage-scale at the firm concerned. In the case of part-time workers, the above-mentioned salary is reduced in proportion to the number of working hours. However, young people employed part-time under a PEP contract receive a flat-rate tideover allowance of FB 6 000 a month from the National Employment and Placement Service.
In the public sector, the federal authorities will in future take on 1% of trainees under PEP contracts.

Integration into the job market

DK

1 ASSISTANCE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Unemployed persons of under 25 in receipt of unemployment benefit who have not undergone qualifying vocational training courses are entitled to, or obliged to accept, a minimum of 18 months' training after a total of six months' unemployment in a nine-month period. Unemployed persons of under 25 in receipt of social assistance are also entitled to an offer after 13 weeks' social assistance at the latest. This training may take the form of:
- normal youth education courses
- newly established 18-month courses at vocational training schools and AMU (labour market training) centres
- other State-subsidised vocational guidance or technical programmes (e.g. at technical or day-time institutes).

The benefit payable during training depends on the choice of course.

"Benefit" period (2 years)
Offers to the unemployed during this period are based on assessment of regional needs.

"Active" period (3 years)
The unemployed are both entitled to and obliged to accept offers throughout the "active" period. Their rights and obligations will be phased in as from 1 July 1996 and will be fully operational by the end of 1998.

Unemployed persons who participate in job training or "pool" job schemes are guaranteed a benefit corresponding to the maximum unemployment benefit and this amount constitutes an income ceiling. There is no income ceiling for private job training which is therefore full time. Unemployed persons on training courses receive the unemployment benefit to which they would otherwise have been entitled.

2 LOCAL ACTIVITY GENERATION ACT

- Target group: young people under 25 who have been unemployed for 13 weeks
- Procedures:
  + duration: at least 20 hours a week for six months
  + worker: contract for at least 20 hours a week; possibility of combination with other activity generation programmes, training or voluntary activities
- Note: the employer is a municipal authority which can also offer the beneficiary a guidance and introduction project before the start of the activity generation programme. This project (maximum duration: six weeks) will in most cases result in the preparation of a personalised action plan.

F

1 CES (Employment and solidarity contracts)

- Target group: young people aged 18-25 with difficulties in gaining access to employment.
- Procedures: see 5.2.1(1)

2 INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS

- Target group: young people under 26 with serious difficulties
- Procedures:
  + duration: contract with a maximum duration of 24 months
  + employer: ° subsidy of FF 38 000 per job
  ° 50% reduction in employer's social security, family allowance and industrial accident insurance contributions
  ° aid from a loan guarantee fund (for working capital and investment).

3 TEMPORARY INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS

- Target group: young people under 26 with serious difficulties
- Procedures:
  + duration: contract with a maximum duration of 24 months
  + employer: ° subsidy of FF 180 000 per full-time job
  ° 50% reduction in employer's social security, family allowance and industrial accident insurance contributions
  ° aid from a loan guarantee fund (for working capital and investment)
  ° cumulative public subsidies must not exceed FF 300 000 FF per job per year.

4 JOB SEEKERS' CLUB

Target group: priority is given to young job seekers under 26 with a diploma (at least secondary school leaving certificate ["bac"] plus 2 years' study), with no professional experience and with a precise career objective.
- Content: the ANPE offers job club members:
  + training in how to spot company vacancy notices;
  + information on companies;
  + logistical support (provision of equipment);
  + contribution towards the costs incurred.

5 FROM DIPLOMA TO EMPLOYMENT

- Objective: development of a career plan based on the skills acquired at university and in the individual's own environment; validation through a practical period in an undertaking.
- Target group: young graduates (maximum secondary school leaving certificate ["bac"] plus 2 years' study, all subjects together, with a precise career objective.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 7 - 12 weeks
  + content: alternating between group work, personal interviews and periods of actual employment. Ends with a practical period in a company. This includes an analysis, information on company operation and work on negotiating and job-seeking techniques.

6 INFORMATION CENTRES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

These centres, based on co-operation between the ANPE, local services and local/regional authorities to help young people find a first job, provide a single address where young people can obtain advice and information relating to all the difficulties they encounter (need for guidance, labour market integration, health, accommodation, etc.).

A

Integration into the job market

FIN

1 YOUTH PROGRAMME

1. "YOUTH" PROGRAMME
- Objective:
  + to provide basic or vocational training for young people without qualifications
  + to allow young people with previous training but no job to continue vocational training
  + to procure temporary employment for unemployed young people with qualifications or university degrees
- Procedures: co-operation between the ministries responsible for employment, education, social affairs and health
- Note: this programme also encourages the organisation of seminars for young people.

An agreed line of action at local level between the employment offices and the municipalities is to try to identify target groups an pool resources for action to prevent long-term unemployment.

2 NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR REDUCING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Since the beginning of 1996 the passive labour market support paid to teenagers was discontinued. In May 1996 the Government decided to boost training of the young (and thus also to prevent LTU emergence among the young) by excluding the under 20 years old from labour market support if they refuse training or subsidized employment. This is planned to be raised to 25 years old taking effect at the beginning of 1997.

The national strategy for reducing youth unemployment (and thus also preventing LTU) continues to involve increasing amounts of training. In 1996-98 the number of students will be increased by about 5000 annually and the social partners have agreed to increase student intake by 4000.
Also to be noted that the Finnish industry has targeted to give a 'summer-job' to about 60000 youths this year. Though this is not a targeted LTU measure it could also contribute to LTU prevention.

3 INNOVATIVE WORKSHOPS

An initiative 'innovative workshops' for young people has recently been lauched. It is targeted especially for the young threatened by exclusion. The idea is to join the training system with working life. The task of innovative workshops is to teach young people how to manage their lives and develop their abilities and to give guidance on how to proceed after the workshop period in order to get work, establish their own firm or to get vocational training. The innovative workshops are based on local needs and requirements, the role of municipalities has been crucial. About 250 workshops are in operation (220 of them are municipal). They have been funded by the European Social Fund.

I

1 JOB EXPERIENCE

Job experience schemes have been introduced to help young people and workers with serious difficulties in reintegrating into the labour market. Young people aged 19-32 (and long-term unemployed persons on placement lists up to the age of 35) are assigned to jobs benefiting the community and training projects at various levels ("plans for the occupational reintegration of young people without work", Article 15 of Law 451/94).

2 MEZZOGIORNO - EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGIONS

Law No 236/93: Fund for the employment of young people in cultural activities, tourism and social services in the Mezzogiorno. Law No 44 on the promotion and development of employment for young people in the Mezzogiorno has been in force since 1986 and has recently been amended by Decree No 695 of 24.11.94, which introduces a number of new aspects concerning eligible expenditure, facilities to be provided, etc.

P

1 APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (D.L. n° 102 of 29.3.84 and D.L. n° 436 of 23.11.88)

To allow young people aged 14-24 with at least six year's schooling and looking for their first job to obtain a vocational training certificate needed to facilitate transition from education to work.

2 INITIAL SKILL TRAINING (D.L. n° 401 of 16.10.91)

Training (of at least one year's duration) for over-15s who have completed compulsory education and are looking for their first job.

3 TECHNOLOGICAL SPECIALISATION MEASURES (D.L. n° 401 of 16.10.91)

Post-secondary training aimed mainly at people with a secondary education certificate or third-level qualification looking for their first job.

4 UNIVA (INTEGRATION INTO WORKING LIFE UNITS)

These units have been set up in a bid to facilitate integration and the link between training and working life by helping young people seeking their first job (as well as other persons). They offer placement and other services to help the persons concerned integrate into working life.
(D.N. n° 87 of 5.6.92, Despacho conjunto of 24.7.92 - series II, Despacho conjunto of 15.12.93 - series II and Despacho conjunto of 26.8.94 - series II).

They have been set up within schools, training centres, publicly administered bodies and professional associations in order to facilitate integration and the link between training and working life, etc.

5 CREATION OF JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Creation of jobs for young people aged 16-30 seeking their first job, by exempting employers from social security contributions (see 3.2)

6 INTEGRATION INTO THE JOB MARKET

Integration allowance

7 BUSINESS START-UP INCENTIVES (see 4.2.3)

8 PRACTICAL TRAINEESHIPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Objective: to improve preparation for working life
- Target group: young people registered as unemployed
- Procedures:
  + duration: max. 6 months
  + content: practical vocational training
  + trainee: monthly allowance equal to twice the national minimum wage if the trainee's previous training is at higher level, otherwise 1.3 times the minimum wage.

UK

1 CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

The UK has made changes and improvements to ease the transition from school to work by helping young people gain the skills they need for entry to the workforce. The proportion of young people staying on in education after compulsory schooling has increased significantly in recent years; and the proportion of young people who enter higher education has increased from one in seven in 1987 to almost one in three now. Measures include: - in education, the national Curriculum has raised levels of achievement. From September 1995 a revised Curriculum increased flexibility and became more responsive to school pupils' needs; - General National Vocational Qualifications are being developed to broaden the range of vocational qualifications for pupils of all abilities. They will provide routes into employment or progression to higher education; - the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) has helped improve the vocational relevance of schools' curricula and prepare young people better for working life.

2 TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP MEASURES (See point 5.1.6)

3 DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

Disadvantaged young people aged 18 to 24 - particularly those who have been unemployed for long periods - can benefit from the full range of government measures to help people find work. The new national "Workwise" programme is specifically designed to help those aged 18-24 who have been unemployed for one year or more to improve the effectiveness of their jobsearch.

Job-training-apprenticeship

A

1 PROMOTION OF VOCATIONAL AND CONTINUING TRAINING

- Target group: young people with difficulties in finding a job
- Objective: to offer vocational and continuing training and preparation for employment
- Procedures:
  + organisation: continuing training establishments set up by social partners, firms, training bodies and public-interest associations
  + young people: °allowance towards costs of participation
    °health/accident insurance

2 PROMOTION OF APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

- Target group: young people with disadvantages on the labour market (mentally or physically disabled, those with social adaptation problems, those who have dropped out of education, second-generation immigrants, young women in occupations in which women are under-represented, etc.).
- Procedures:
  + organisation: where additional apprenticeship posts are created, the Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) reimburses part of the apprenticeship allowance payable by firms which employ and train persons with disadvantages on the labour market.
  + beneficiaries: firms and, in certain circumstances, the young people concerned

3 PROMOTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY IN-COMPANY TRAINING

- Target group: apprentices
- Objective: to improve apprenticeship training quality and encourage multi-disciplinary expertise through supplementary training which not all apprenticeship training establishments can offer.

Procedures: aid paid to firms or establishments covers around 50% of costs; it is limited to three months per apprentice per year of apprenticeship training.

B

1 NATIONAL - SANDWICH TRAINING

- Target group: low-skilled young people aged 18-25
- Procedures:
  + duration: max. 3 years
  + employer: 100% exemption from social contributions during productive period.

2 NATIONAL - INDUSTRIAL APPRENTICESHIPS

Industrial apprenticeships - the aim is to allow young people aged 16 to 18 (except where special dispensations are granted for persons over 18) to learn an occupation. This involves alternation between work experience and study: practical work experience is organised at the firm concerned and at the same time theoretical work is done at a school or training centre.
The Walloon joint declaration on economic redeployment and employment promotion provides for the creation of a training and integration scheme aimed at offering trainees practical job experience alongside vocational training, plus the guarantee of a job for a period equivalent to no less than the duration of the traineeship.
In the Flemish alliance for jobs, it is stipulated that the various "strands" of training for young people will be drawn together to form a coherent whole consisting of both theory and practice.

E

1 APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS

- Target group: young people aged 16-25 who do not have a certificate needed for a practical training contract.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 6 months - 3 years
  + worker:
    ° attends theoretical training for at least 15% of agreed working time;
    ° remuneration: laid down in collective agreements; at least 70% of the cross-industry minimum wage the first year, 80% the second year, and 90% the third year. Reduction of social security contributions also granted.

2 PRACTICAL TRAINING CONTRACTS

- Objective: to promote integration of young people with no vocational experience by offering practical vocational training corresponding to their level of education.
- Target group: university graduates and persons with mid/high-level vocational training or recognised certificates allowing them to exercise a profession, during a period of four years following acquisition of their qualifications
- Procedures:
  + duration: between 6 months and 2 years.
  + worker: remuneration laid down in an agreement, not less than the minimum wage or 60% of the collectively agreed wage for an equivalent job (75% during the second year).
  + employer: subsidy (from the MTSS and ESF) of PTA 550 000 on conversion of training contracts into permanent employment contracts.

F

1 APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS

- Procedures:
  + duration: 1-3 years
  + worker: exemption from social contributions
  + employer:
    ° For apprenticeship, a new mechanism of aid for the employers is set up by the law of 6 May 1996.
Pre-existing aid (recruitment, tax credit, aid premium for training, apprenticeship tax exemption) is discontinued and is replaced by a premium the minimum amount of which is 26.000 Frs for a two-year-old contract. This amount can be raised according to the age of the apprentice and to the duration of training. The cost should be 3 billion Frs in 1996. This premium is added to the exemption from social security contributions from which any employer of apprentice benefits (3.7 billion Frs in initial law finances in 1996).

2 SKILL TRAINING CONTRACTS

- Target group: young people aged 16-25, without a diploma, with an obsolete or inadequate diploma, or not at school or university.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 6 months - 2 years
  + employer:
    ° 100% exemption from social contributions on the amount of remuneration above the minimum wage (SMIC).
    ° partial coverage of training costs: FF 60 per hour of training, paid by a supplementary resources order (OMA) or tax exemption (0.1% and 0.3% or 0.4%) and reimbursement of FF 100 per hour of instructor training (maximum: 40 hours).
    ° flat-rate State grant:
    FF 5 000 per contract with a duration not exceeding 18 months;
    FF 7 000 per contract with a duration of more than 18 months.

3 SANDWICH TRAINING

- Target group: young people aged 16-25 who have left school without a technical education certificate.
- Procedure:
  + duration: between 300 and 1 200 hours.
  + financing: State

4 REGIONAL - SKILL TRAINING MEASURES

- Target group: young people aged 16-25 who have left school with a leaving certificate or have completed the first year at university or have completed sandwich training.
-Procedures:
  + duration: 800 hours (average)
  + training organised and implemented at the initiative of the regional authorities.

Job-training-apprenticeship

IRL

1 YOUTHREACH

- Target group: young people aged 15-17 whose education is inadequate or was not acquired at an official school

- Procedures:
  + duration: 2 years
  + objective: basic training, teaching and vocational experience

2 COMMUNITY YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAMME

- Target group: young people who have dropped out of secondary education
- Procedure: the projects must be of benefit to the community, for example, the renovation of old peoples' homes, decoration of community centres, extension of community halls etc. Since 1984 this programme has also served as the main support vehicle for any local communities wishing to undertake major construction projects. FAS pays standing training allowance to the trainees and for the instructor costs. The community organisation sponsoring the project must pay for the costs of materials.

3 OPTIONS INITIATIVES FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

- Target group: all recent school-leavers aged 18 or over with an underlying entitlement to unemployment assistance of at least Irl £15 per week
- Procedure: The scheme is at present at the pilot stage. Participation for 2 and a half days a week (including a half-day's training) is required in return for a payment of Irl £40 a week. Participation is limited to a maximum of 12 months. The participant may take up any other available part-time work without restriction on the remaining days of the week.

4 APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS (Standards-Based Apprenticeship)

The overall objective of the scheme is to ensure that apprentices are trained in sufficient numbers and to an appropriate level of skill to meet the existing and projected needs of the economy for skilled workers.

A new apprenticeship system was introduced in September 1993. the new system is partly funded by a payroll levy and is based on standards achieved rather than time served. It ensures a satisfactory balance between supply and demand for apprentices, and reduces the financial cost to the state while maintaining quality.

S

1 TRAINING PROGRAMME

- Target group: young people aged 17-20
- Procedures:
  + duration: 6 months, extension possible for a further 6 months if the employer is prepared to employ the participant on completion of training.
  + worker: remuneration of SKr 3 000 paid by the employer during the second 6-month period. Otherwise the financial conditions are the same as for practical training for university graduates.

2 PROGRAMME FOR THE INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

- Procedures:
+ content: 4 months' practical training followed by at least 6 months' employment with the same employer
+ worker: practical training period: remuneration equal to that of university graduates in practical training
employment period: remuneration according to employment contract
+ employer: recruitment subsidies in some cases.
- Note: apprenticeship training agreements may be concluded by the social partners at branch level.

UK

1 MODERN APPRENTICESHIP

-Target group: mainly 16 and 17 year old school and college leavers with the ability to gain high level skills and qualifications. Also available for 18-24 year olds.

-Procedures: high quality, employer-based training; leads to nationally recognised qualifications at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 or above; available in over 50 industry sectors; Modern Apprentices have employed status wherever possible; training period depends on individual cicrumstances, but commonly 3-4 years.

2 TRAINING FOR WORK

- Target group: people unemployed for more than 6 months - priority access given to those age 18-24

-Procedures: training to gain occupational skills or vocational qualifications according to individual needs.

A

Reintegration into the job market

A

1 INSERTION SUBSIDY FOR SOCIALLY USEFUL WORK (Gemeinnützige Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

- Objective: to promote fixed-term employment by associations and local authorities.
- Target groups: long-term unemployed, women returning to the jobs market, women with others to look after, and persons in need of psychological and/or vocational guidance.
- Procedures:
  + duration: maximum 1 year (2 years for persons over the age of 45, 3 years for disabled)
  + employer: subsidy not exceeding two thirds of gross pay and associated contributions (ceiling: OS 37,800): the balance of wage costs is partly financed by the local/regional authorities, etc.

2 COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Bebtriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

- Target groups: long-term unemployed and those disadvantaged in the labour market
- Procedures:
  + duration: Max. 2 years (36 months for the disabled)
  + employer: subsidy not exceeding 50% of wage costs; aid amounting to total gross remuneration for first three months of employment is also possible.
- Conditions: the applicant firm must not have employed the person concerned during the previous two years and must offer him or her an open-ended employment contract.

B

1 PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RISK GROUPS See 5.1.1(2)

2 MONITORING OF THE UNEMPLOYED (Plan d'Accompagnement)

Compulsory monitoring, by the public employment services, of persons under the age of 46 who have been unemployed for nine months.

3 "THIRD EMPLOYMENT CIRCUIT" (TROISIEME CIRCUIT DE TRAVAIL - TCT)

- Conditions: non-market sector, meeting collective needs which otherwise would not have been met.
- Procedures:
  + employer: subsidy amounting to 95% of remuneration and social contributions; retention of 10% of the subsidy in the case of paid services.

4 INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Insertion)

- Target group: unemployed persons particularly isolated from the labour market
- Conditions: performance of work in the third sector; provision of vocational training for workers
- Procedures: State aid in various forms.

5 RECRUITMENT BENEFIT PLAN (Law MB 23.12.94 - Plan avantage à l'embauche)

a) Job creation:

- Conditions: recruitment of a long-term unemployed person into a newly created job
- Procedure: grant of BFR 75 000 per quarter

b) Recruitment aid:

- Procedures:
  + employer: reduction in employer's social security contributions:
  75% the first year, 50% the second year, for a person unemployed for > 1 year
  100% the first year, 75% the second year, for a person unemployed for > 2 years
  + condition: full-time employment contract (or part-time if at least 50% of full-time)

c) Early retirement pension:

- Procedures:
  + employer: 66% reduction in employer's contribution if the person taking early retirement is replaced by a long-term unemployed person.

6 JOBCLUBS

The three regional employment and placement offices (FOREM, ORBEM and VDAB) have set up "jobclubs" for the purpose of helping job-seekers organise their "job-hunting" more efficiently.

D

1 PROMOTION OF PERMANENT RECRUITMENT OF THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED THROUGH WAGE SUBSIDIES (SPECIAL PROGRAMME OF THE FEDERAL G'MENT)

- Target group: those who have been registered unemployed for at least 12 months before recruitment
- Procedure:
  + duration: 1 year
  + employer: receives a wage subsidy to the amount of 60% to 80% of the wage for the first 6 months and to the amount of 40% to 60% in the following 6 months depending on the length of unemployment of the person recruited.

The programme has been extended until the end of 1999 (cf. 5.x).

2 PROMOTION OF PROJECTS FOR EMPLOYMENT, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SOCIAL CARE

- Target group: hard-to-place long-term unemployed
- Procedures:
  + employer: subsidy of 80% (usually) towards investment, general costs and costs for training and care staff.

Reintegration into the job market

DK

1 ASSISTANCE TO THE UNEMPLOYED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

For more infromation on the framework of the unemployment systems see point 5.1.1. Measures to find work for unemployed persons in receipt of unemployment benefit include the following:
- Placement in non-subsidised jobs
- Information and guidance
- Individual action plan (see 4.2.5)

- JOB TRAINING in both public and private sectors. In the private sector wages are governed by the relevant collective agreement. Unemployed persons taken on for job training in the public sector may earn a maximum of Dkr 83 per hour. Employers who take on an unemployed person for job training receive a wage subsidy of approx. Dkr 43 per hour. If the total period during which the subsidy is being paid exceeds six months, private employers must continue to employ the unemployed person without subsidy or offer him or her training.
- INDIVIDUAL JOB TRAINING for unemployed persons who can not be recruited for job training at ordinary workplaces. Wages, which may be lower than those paid for normal job training schemes, are agreed by the organisations empowered to negotiate. The employer's wage subsidy may exceed Dkr 43 per hour and the subsidy period may be more than one year. There is therefore more scope for taking the individual person's qualifications into account.
- "POOL" JOBS are new jobs for people who have been unemployed for a total of two years in a three-year period. They last for up to three years and are in areas of public service which the government wishes to upgrade, such as care, nature and environment, culture. energy, education, labour market, housing, public transport and health. The length of time these jobs last means that they represent more meaningful employment for the individual, not least because employers have an incentive to provide proper training for "pool" employees. This may take the form of supplementary courses and/or real in-house training programmes and may count towards any subsequent training. A benefit is payable during a "pool" job corresponding to the maximum unemployment benefit. The hourly wage is approx. Dkr 83.
- TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, either in the mainstream educational system or as part of a specially designed course adapted to the background of the unemployed person concerned. During training an allowance is payable which corresponds to unemployment benefit in the case of unemployed persons of over 25 and half the maximum unemployment benefit in the case of young persons of under 25. Young persons eligible for a State student grant (SU) or who are already undergoing training which entitles them to it are not entitled to a training allowance.
- START-UP GRANT for unemployed persons in receipt of unemployment benefit who want to set up and run their own business. The start-up grant corresponds to 50% of the maximum unemployment benefit and is payable for up to 2½ years.
- TRAVELLING EXPENSES payable for participation in training courses, individual job training schemes or "pool" jobs.

The recruitment of unemployed persons to ordinary or individual job training schemes or "pool" jobs must result in an increase in the staffing level and not give rise to unfair competition with private undertakings.

Reintegration into the job market

E

1 SUBSIDY FOR THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

- target group: long-term unemployed persons
- procedures:
  + employer: tax reduction and a one-off subsidy (400.000 to 500.000 ptas per contract)

2 SUBSIDY FOR PART-TIME WORK

- target group: long-term unemployed persons, over 45 year olds, the disabled and those on income support
- procedures:
  + employer: 50% or 75% of lower contributions

F

1 CES (Employment and Solidarity Contracts)

- Target group: long-term job seekers who have been registered for at least 12 out of the 18 months prior to recruitment.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 3 - 12 months (up to 36 months for persons in serious difficulties)
  + worker: fixed-term part-time contract (20 hours).
  + employer: 100% exemption from all statutory and collectively agreed social contributions (unemployment insurance contributions), with a limit based on hourly SMIC; remuneration on the basis of SMIC, with funding by the State amounting to 65% (85% for certain groups with special difficulties) or by certain employers' organisations eligible for aid from a compensation fund; possibility of individual assistance from the compensation fund amounting to 50% or 100% of the balance of the cost to be covered by the employer.

2 CONSOLIDATED EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS (Contrat Emploi Consolide)

- Target group: persons on Employment and Solidarity Contracts who encounter special difficulties at the end of their contract, or long-term unemployed persons.
- Procedures:
  + duration: open-ended contract or fixed-term contract (12 months, renewable four times)
  + employer:
- subsidy based on weekly working time of 30 hours, with a ceiling of 120% of SMIC
- 100% exemption from all statutory and collectively agreed social contributions (except unemployment insurance contributions, supplementary retirement pension contributions and, where applicable, travel costs)
- Reimbursement of remuneration: 60% of the ceiling the first year; 50% the second year, 40% the third year, 30% the fourth year and 20% the fifth year; in the case of persons in the most serious difficulties, 50% reimbursement may be granted for the first five years of the contract.

3 INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Insertion)

- Target group: the long-term unemployed
- Procedures:
  + duration: contract with a maximum duration of 24 months
  + employer:
- grant of FF 38 000 per job
- 50% reduction in employer's social security, family allowance and industrial accident insurance contributions
- aid from a loan guarantee fund (for working capital and investment).

4 TEMPORARY INTEGRATION UNDERTAKINGS (Entreprises d'Interim d'Insertion)

- Target group: the long-term unemployed

- Procedures:
  + duration: contract with a maximum duration of 24 months
  + employer:
- grant of FF 180 000 per full-time job
- 50% reduction in employer's social security, family allowance and industrial accident insurance contributions
- aid from a loan guarantee fund (for working capital and investment).
- cumulative public subsidies must not exceed FF 300 000 per job per year.

5 INTERMEDIARY ASSOCIATIONS (Associations intermédiaires)

Open-ended or fixed-term contract.

- Procedures:
+ 100% exemption from employer's social insurance and family allowance contributions. The exemption relates to employees' remuneration for working time up to 750 hours per calendar year or over a continuous period of one year. Remuneration above that limit is subject to contributions at the normal rate.

6 SIFE (Integration and employment traineeships)

- Procedures:
  + duration: min. 40, max. 1 200 hours;
  average: individual traineeships 150 hours, group traineeships 430 hours
  + content: personalised training, in the form of a combination of modules depending on the needs of the person concerned; part of the training takes place in an undertaking.

7 FURTHER GUIDANCE MODULE (MOA - Module d'Orientation approfondie)

- Target group: persons with very serious difficulties in integrating, e.g. because they have been unemployed for a very long time.

- Objective: to offer persons excluded from the labour market for a long time an opportunity to analyse their personal and career situation with a view to mapping out a pathway to integration.
- Procedure:
  + duration: 50-200 hours spread out over three months
  + content: several modules which can be combined according to needs.

8 MOBILITY ASSISTANCE (Aide à la mobilité)

- Objective: to encourage mobility among long-term job seekers.

- Procedure: flat-rate assistance for daily travel (FF 200, 300 or 400 per month during the first three months of work) and on removal (FF 5 000 in normal cases and FF 7 000 in special cases.
- Conditions:
  * Acceptance of a job away from the place of residence, with an open-ended contract or a fixed-term contract for at least 12 months.
  * Removal to take a job away from the normal place of residence.

9 EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE CONTRACT

Long-term job-seekers and persons in difficulty, on being recruited by a company, attract entitlement to total exemption from social security contributions to the value of the SMIC, together with payment of a subsidy of FF 2 000 per month, for a maximum of two years.

FIN

1 LAW NO 1158/94

Law No 1158/94:
- Objective: to improve the employment prospects for the long-term unemployed by encouraging employers to offer them fixed-term contracts.
- Procedures: temporary derogations from the provisions of the law on employment contracts.

I

1 EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

- Target group: disadvantaged groups of workers, i.e.:

  + workers affected by industrial change and in receipt of the special income allowance (CIG) for more than 24 months,
  + the long-term unemployed (more than 24 months),
  + workers on the "mobility lists" (temporarily laid-off workers awaiting redeployment),
  + persons seeking their first job,
  + physically disabled workers.
- Procedures:
  + employers: tax credits and reductions in social security contributions.

IRL

1 BACK TO WORK ALLOWANCE

- Procedure:

  + duration: 3 years
  + worker: continuation of unemployment benefit (75% the first year, 50% the second year and 25% in the third year)
  + condition: recruitment into certain specified sectors, or self-employment

Since being launched, the programme has encouraged 13000 persons to return to activity

2 RECRUITMENT ASSISTANCE

- Target group: workers unemployed for at least 13 weeks
- Procedure:

  + duration: 2 years
  + employer: exemption from social security contributions

3 COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

- Target group: people unemployed for more than one year, people on single-parent benefit and those referred by the Rehabilitation Board. .
- Procedure: financing of projects of benefit to the community, organised by public or voluntary or community bodies

In 1996 a total of Ir£267.7 million was allocated to CE. The programme was split into two options, Part Time Integration Option and Part Time Job Option with 30,000 and 10,000 places available under each option respectively.

4 PILOT WHOLE-TIME JOBS OPTION

-Target Group: Long term unemployed in receipt of UA/UB, Lone Parents Allowance for over 5 years. Must be over 35 years of age and live in a designated disadvantaged area.
- Procedure: Duration: 3 years. The pilot will finish in December 1999.
- Employer: Local "not for profit" sponsors provide three years full time work employers are exempt from employers PRSI contribution.

The aim of the scheme is to provide 1,000 people with full-time work for three years. It specifically targets those long-term unemployed for whom access to the labour market is extremely limited now and for the forseeable future.

5 JOBSTART

- Target Group: Long-term unemployed, Rehabilitation Board referrals, travelling community in receipt of welfare payments for three years or longer.
- Procedure: A subsidy of £80 per week is paid to the employer in respect of 52 weeks continuous employment of Jobstart participant. Jobstart worker may keep secondary benefits subject to earnings. Any registered employer will be eligible to apply. The target is to cater for 5,000 people. The jobs must be full-time and must not displace an existing worker.

NL

1 "WORK POOLS" (Banenpools)

- Objective: to offer work to the long-term unemployed on unemployment benefit, by creating additional jobs in health care and assistance, security and kindergartens (nurseries).
- Procedure:
  + worker:
    ° remuneration between the minimum wage and the minimum wage + 20%
    ° open-ended contract for an average of 32 hours a week

2 "JOB CLUBS" (Sollicitatieclubs)

- Objective: to help with job search
- Target group: people unemployed for more than six months
- Procedure: help in groups with developing effective job search skills

Reintegration into the job market

3 JOB CREATION

see 2.x.x.x recent measures, local and household services

P

1 EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES

Employment incentives in connection with conservation of the cultural heritage (Portaria n° 247 of 29.3.95).

2 SELF-PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE

Self-placement assistance (Portaria n° 247 of 29.3.95).
Grants to encourage the very long-term unemployed (2 years and over) to find jobs themselves.

3 PLACEMENT INCENTIVES

Placement incentives (payment of advertisement costs) (Portaria n° 247 of 29.3.95).
To encourage initiatives on the part of the long-term and very long-term unemployed to solve their own problems.

4 SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE FOR THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

Self-employment incentive for the long-term unemployed and older workers, in the form of a 20% increase in the corresponding allowance (12 times the minimum wage).

5 LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

An integrated programme to combat long-term unemployment: stimulation and processing of job offers, vocational guidance, personalised training programmes and support for various forms of job placement.

6 ADULT EDUCATION (PRODEP)

The adult-education programme focuses particularly on long-term unemployed persons with poor training and educational qualifications.

S

1 RECRUITMENT AID

- Target group: the long-term unemployed
- Procedures:
  + employer: subsidy of up to 50% of wage costs, with a ceiling of SKr 14 300 per month.
  + duration: max. 6 months (extension possible up to 12 months)
- Conditions:
  + employers: private sector, local authorities, etc.

2 PROGRAMME FOR THE ACQUISITION OF VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Target group: unemployed
- Objective: to provide an opportunity to participate in activities benefiting the community or local companies, which otherwise would not have taken place.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 6 months
  + conditions: regular workers must not be replaced.

UK

1 TRAINING FOR WORK (main training programme for unemployed adults)

- Target Group: people unemployed for more than 6 months
- Procedures: training to gain occupational skills or vocational qualifications according to individual needs. In 1995/96 over 200,000 people will benefit.

2 JOB CLUBS

- Target group: people unemployed for more than 6 months
- Procedure: advice and training in jobseeking techniques. Job Clubs constitute a forum for mutual help among job seekers. They provide writing paper, stamps and telephone facilities. In 1996/97, there are 239 000 opportunities at a cost of £40.275 million.

3 JOB INTERVIEW GUARANTEES

- Target group: people unemployed for more than 6 months
- Procedure: In exchange for an improved job vacancy management service, employers guarantee an interview for persons unemployed for more than 6 months. The improved service matches unemployed persons with suitable vacancies and proposes vocational preparation courses (300 000 opportunities in 1996/97, at a cost pf £24.365m.

4 RESTART INTERVIEWS

- Target group: compulsory after 6 months' unemployment, then every 6 months.
- Procedure: The aim is to facilitate reintegration of the long-term unemployed (employment, training, etc.). Allow public employment services to confirm the availability of job seekers and the fact that they are actively seeking work. More than 2.22 million interviews are forecast for 1996/97 at a cost of £27.9m.

5 JOBPLAN WORKSHOPS

- Target group: People who have been unemployed for 12 months and decline the offer of a place on other Government employment or training programmes.
- Procedure: compulsory one-week course; individual assessment and guidance with a view to developing a strategy for reintegration into working life (around 150,000 opportunities available during 1996/97 at a cost of £17.85 million).

6 RESTART COURSES

- Target group: people who have been unemployed for 24 months and decline the offer of a place on other government employment or training programmes.
- Procedure: compulsory two-week programme (part-time) to help people with their jobsearch (76,400 places available in 1996/97 at a cost of £9.55 million).

7 WORK TRIALS

- Target group: persons unemployed for more than 6 months.
- Procedure:
  + duration: up to 3 weeks
  + worker: draws unemployment benefit
  + employer: no wage to pay and no obligation to recruit at the end of the period (In 1996/97 there are 39,700 opportunities available at a cost of £4.075 million).

8 WORKWISE

- Target group: people age 18-24 who have been unemployed for 12 months and decline the offer of a place on another Government employment or training programme.
- Procedure: compulsory 4 week part-time programme. Provides guidance and help in jobsearch. 30,000 opportunities available during 1996/97 at a cost of £7.86 million.

9 JOBSEARCH PLUS

- Target group: people unemployed for more than 13 weeks
- Procedure: training and advice on effective job search including defining clear and realistic job goals and developing job hunting techniques. In 1996/97 80,000 persons are expected to benefit at a cost of £5.92m.

10 1-2-1

-Target group: people unemployed for a year (with a proportion of opportunities reserved for 18-24 year olds)
-Procedure: series of intensive interviews for long-term unemployed. In 1996/97, 239,000 people are expected to benefit at a cost of £15.7m.

Measures for older workers

A

1 BONUS/PENALTY SYSTEM IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (Bonus-Malus System)

If an employer takes on a worker aged 50 or over, his unemployment insurance contributions are reduced by half; if a worker is at least 55 years old when taken on, the employer's unemployment insurance contribution is dispensed with altogether.
If, however, an employer terminates the employment of such a worker, he must make a one-off payment ("penalty") to the unemployment insurance scheme.

2 COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Bebtriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

- Target group: unemployed over-45s
- Procedures: see 2.2.1 (2)

3 EXTENDED MEASURES

Where integration measures fail to help long-term unemployed persons, such persons may benefit from extended measures such as unemployment and training benefit (Schulungsarbeitslosengeld) or end-of-entitlement allowances.

D

1 WAGE SUBSIDIES FOR OLDER WORKERS

- Target group: unemployed persons aged 50 or over who have been unemployed for at least 12 out of the last 18 months.
- Procedure:
  + duration: in exceptional cases up to 8 years
  + employer: wage subsidy amounting to 50%-70% of pay.

In addition, older workers are promoted within the framework of assistance for labour market reintegration (see point 5.2.1).

F

1 CES (Employment and Solidarity Contracts)

- Target group: job seekers over the age of 50
- Procedures: see 5.2.1(1)

2 "DELALANDE" CONTRIBUTION

-Target group: employees aged 50 or over
- Procedures:
  + employer: additional contribution (equivalent to 1-6 months' gross pay) to the unemployment insurance fund on termination of an employment contract leading to entitlement to unemployment benefit.

3 INTERMEDIARY ASSOCIATIONS

- Target group: unemployed over-50s.
- Procedures:
  + duration: open-ended or fixed-term contract
  + employer: 100% exemption from employer's social insurance and family allowance contributions; the exemption relates to employees' remuneration for working time up to 750 hours per calendar year or over a continuous period of one year.

4 EMPLOYMENT REPLACEMENT ALLOWANCE (Allocation de Remplacement pour l'Emploi)

- Persons concerned: employees having contributed for 40 years to the old-age insurance scheme.

Details:

- payment by the unemployment insurance scheme of an allowance equivalent to 65% of their former salary, up to the age of 60,
- the beneficiary must quit work and a job-seeker (more particularly, a young person aged under 26) be recruited in his place.

NL

1 Employment protection

Target group: workers aged 55 or over.
Ban on redundancy plans focusing on workers over 55. In the event of mass redundancies, regional employment offices ensure an even distribution among all worker categories; and it is no longer possible to retire older workers first.

Measures for unemployed women

A

1 INNOVATORY VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- Objective: to combat labour market segregation based on sex.
- Content: additional modern skills, modular training courses, concentration on specific target groups (e.g. women returning to the labour market), apprenticeship training for technical/manual occupations, etc.

2 CHILDCARE ALLOWANCE (Kinderbetreuungsbeihilfe)

- Target group: persons on low incomes (present gross monthly income ceiling, including all transfer income, is OS 21,450 for single persons and OS 31,200 for families), where the need to look after a child means the person concerned cannot accept a job, attend training offered by the Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) or continue to work.
- Objective: to enable the child to be left in a childcare centre or with a private individual (not a member of the family).
- Procedures:
  + amount: depends on the person's income, the cost of childcare and the length of the period in question.
  + duration: 3 years per child (application must be renewed every six months).

3 CHILDMINDERS AND CHILDCARE PROJECTS

The Placement and Employment Promotion Service (Arbeitsmarktservice) is attempting to remedy the shortcomings in extra-family childcare by encouraging the use of childminders and childcare projects. Special provisions are designed to promote employment in private childcare establishments with the longest opening times (coverage of 50% of wage costs for the first 4 years).

4 COMPENSATION FOR REINTEGRATION OF A WORKER FOLLOWING PARENTAL LEAVE

- Target group: recipients of parental leave benefit (Karenzurlaubsgeld) who have interrupted their occupational activity to look after a child.
- Procedures:
  + duration: 3 months
  + employers: grant amounting to 66% of the employee's gross pay in firms with no more than 10 employees (40% in firms with up to 50 employees); larger companies are not eligible unless they organise special training measures for reintegrated workers (this type of aid is not a statutory entitlement)

5 COMPANY INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE (Betriebliche Eingliederungsbeihilfe)

- Target group: women experiencing difficulties in the labour market following a long career break or as a result of sex discrimination.
- Procedures: see 5.2.1 (2)

A

Measures for unemployed women

D

1 TRAINING AID

- Target group: women returning to the labour market
- Conditions: the person concerned must be eligible for training benefit (the training in view must improve her job prospects and she must be looking for a job with working time of more than 18 hours a week).
- Procedures:
  + workers:
  ° possibility of part-time training for women who cannot attend full-time training owing to their family responsibilities
  ° possibility of reimbursement of childcare costs during training periods (maximum DM 120 per child).
  + employers: possibility of training grants for in-company training for women returning to the labour market who are recruited (max. 30% of the collectively-agreed wage for up to one year).

2 SPECIAL QUALIFICATION ASSISTANCE (ESF co-financing)

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is introducing smaller-scale programmes, e.g. special qualification assistance. These programmes are limited in terms of both funding and time and are sometimes co-financed by the European Social Fund.

3 CREATION OF APPRENTICESHIPS (Regional: Saxony, ESF co-financing)

- Procedure:
  + employer: grant of DM 6 000 per apprenticeship post created in certain sectors if that post is occupied by a woman
  + conditions:
  ° the post created must be occupied by a woman
  ° the number of apprenticeship posts must not exceed 10% of the company's workforce
  ° firms must be small (< 50 employees) or medium-sized (< 250 employees) and located in employment areas with a shortage of apprenticeship posts.

4 REGIONAL ADVISORY AGENCIES

Regional advisory agencies have been set up in all Länder to provide training and employment advice for women returning to the labour market. In addition women are given support within the framework of existing labour market instruments in proportion to their number amongst the unemployed.

P

1 VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED WOMEN

Employment and vocational training for women (D.L. n° 445 of 4.10.80). Support for vocational training for unemployed women in order to help them reintegrate into the labour market; the focus is on innovatory areas, traditionally male occupations and self-employment. Also support for the establishing of "exchange and assistance networks" comprising organisations and individuals concerned with training for women, with a view to promoting co-operation and exchanges of information and experience.

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2 TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

Training and employment programmes (D.N. n° 445 of 4.10.80 and D.L. n° 247 of 12.7.85). 20% increase in aid for recruitment of women into occupations where they are under-represented and business start-up aid for women.

3 EXEMPTION FROM VOCATIONAL TRAINING COSTS

Decree n° 8/95 (13.2.95) exempts employers and vocational training establishments from training costs for women. Previous measures promoting training and reintegration for women in traditionally male occupations remain in force.

4 TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN

Decision n° 32/94 (17.5.94) establishes vocational training initiatives for women as a priority objective. A special information network for long-term unemployed women and women returning to the labour market is also planned. There is a proposal concerned with company expansion and job creation at local level in conjunction with local/regional development plans. These initiatives will mainly cover traditional activities (craft trades) and "local services" (tourism, protection of heritage and environment). All these sectors should have a positive impact on the reintegration of women, as they mainly offer jobs for women.

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